

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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RUNNING ROB ;

DR. MAD ANTHONY'S ROLLYCKING SCOUT.

(A TALE OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.) By GENL JAS A. GORDON.

AND OTHER
STORIES



"You can't have it. Them Britishers would—hold on! What are you up to, eh?" "Overboard you go!" cried Rob, leaping into the boat, and tossing the dilatory fisherman over into the river. "Come on, Colonel, no time to lose!"

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RUNNING ROB

Or, MAD ANTHONY'S ROLLYING SCOUT

By GENL. JAS. A. GORDON.

CHAPTER I.—Introducing Hero "Running Rob."

On the 18th of June, 1878, the British army, under Sir Henry Clinton, evacuated Philadelphia and retreated toward New York by way of New Brunswick and Amboy. His army numbered eleven thousand men, red-coated veterans who had seen service on many a battlefield of the revolution. The American army under the immediate command of General Washington had spent the winter at Valley Forge, only twenty miles from Philadelphia, watching the enemy. But their sufferings there during that memorable winter and their patient endurance did more to illustrate their patriotism to the world than all the battles they fought during the entire war.

Washington was on the alert, expecting the foe to make some movement that would enable him to strike an effective blow for his country. His scouts were on the lookout, and every movement was watched by argus-eyed patriots, who were not so dull of comprehension but what they could tell a feint from a real move. On the morning of the 18th of June, the day of the evacuation, a man was seen running at the top of his speed toward the picket line of the patriot army at Valley Forge. He wore the old cocked hat and faded uniform of the Continentals, but his coming from the direction of Philadelphia caused the pickets to be cautious and watchful. On he came, bounding like a frightened deer, making speed that excited the admiration of the sentinels.

"Halt!" cried a sentinel, on seeing that the runner was not going to stop as he approached him.

"Get out of my way!" exclaimed the runner.

"Halt, or I fire!" and the sentinel raised his old flint-lock to his shoulder.

To the surprise of the sentinel, the runner made a flying leap and went clear over his head, kicking the flint out of place so that the musket would not fire.

"Halt—halt—halt!" yelled the picket, running after him, snapping his flint-lock at almost every step.

"Just wait till I do!" came back from the man, with a mocking laugh. "I am going to see General Wayne and haven't got time to fool with you," and, quickening his pace, he bounded away with the speed of a deer, passing out of sight in a minute.

As he neared the tents the sentinels of the general's quarters received the runner with a shout:

"Here comes Running Rob!"

He passed them and darted into the largest tent, where General Wayne himself was seated, surrounded by his staff.

"General!" he cried, without stopping to give the customary salute, "the British army has left Philadelphia and is pushing on toward New York as fast as they can go!"

General Wayne and his staff sprang to their feet.

"Are you sure of that, Rob?" he asked, his usually placid face kindling as with the light of battle.

"Yes, general—I know it!" was the emphatic reply.

"Does the entire army go?"

"Every man of 'em—not even a red rag is left behind!"

The staff officers laughed at the reply, but the impetuous general hastily wrote a few lines on a slip and, handing it to one of his staff, said:

"Take that to General Washington as quickly as you can."

And then turning to the officers about him, he added:

"The army will march in two hours, gentlemen."

Several general officers at once withdrew to place themselves in readiness for the move. Ere five minutes had elapsed since the messenger's arrival with the important news, a captain who had chased him from the picket line dashed up. The stranger was standing at the entrance, and the officer seized him by the throat.

"I have you now, you villain!" he exclaimed.

Swish—thump! The stranger's foot shot from under him, knocking the officer's feet away, and down he went full length on the bare earth.

"Halloo!" exclaimed the staff officer, on seeing the sudden affair. "What's the matter, Rob?"

"Nothing's the matter with me, sir," replied Rob, smiling, as the officer picked himself up as though half the bones in his body were broken.

"Did you trip me, sir?" asked the captain, half drawing his sword from its scabbard.

"Captain Dacres," said General Wayne, who had turned in time to see the captain arising painfully to his feet, "what does this mean?"

Captain Dacres saluted the famous general and said:

"Here's a man who passed the pickets without the countersign," pointing to the man he had chased.

"Then let the picket be shot for neglect of duty," curtly replied the general.

"The guard snapped his gun at him several times, but it missed fire and he got away. I chased him and he came here."

"He did right."

Captain Dacres was the picture of astonishment.

"That man is Rob Ransom," said General Wayne, "the best scout in the American army—Running Rob, as his friends call him."

Dacres looked at the man in surprise, remembering that he had heard of him before, though he had never met him till now. The smile on the face of the scout angered him, and his eyes flashed vindictively as he turned to the general and said:

"But he has no right to pass the sentinels without——"

"The sentinels have no right to let any one pass without the word, captain. Why didn't you run him down and capture him?"

Captain Dacres thought he could detect the faintest tinge of sarcasm in the general's tones, but replied:

"I tried to, general, but he was so far ahead that he reached here first. If he repeats the trick he'll be shot to death on the spot."

"Provided you can catch him," added Rob, with a smile, as the crestfallen captain retired from the tent.

"Rob," said General Wayne, as soon as the captain had left, "tell me about this thing—this evacuation of Philadelphia—when did it occur?"

"It was going on this morning when I left," replied the scout.

"When did you leave?"

"About two hours ago."

"What?"

"Two hours ago, general," he quietly repeated.

"Twenty miles in two hours?" exclaimed the general.

"Yes, sir."

"But you came afoot."

"That wasn't my fault. I started on horseback, but he was shot down, so I came afoot."

"Who shot your horse?"

"The redcoats."

"Did they chase you?"

"About ten miles, and then I left them," with a smile.

An hour passed, and a courier dashed up with an order from General Washington for General Wayne and his scout to repair at once to headquarters.

CHAPTER II.—The March to Philadelphia.

"Come, Rob," said the general, "his excellency wants to see you about this thing."

"I'm ready, general," said Rob, wiping the perspiration from his brow, for the day was quite warm.

They were soon closeted with the commander-in-chief, who turned to General Wayne with:

"How did you get this news so early, general?"

"Through my scout—Running Rob, as we call him," replied Wayne, pointing toward the scout.

Washington cast a glance at Rob, who stood before him with bared head, as in the presence of royalty itself.

"How is it that none of the other scouts have brought any word of this thing?" he asked.

"They are coming as fast as they can, your excellency," said Rob. "I am only the first man in, that's all."

"You must have had a fleet horse."

"My horse was shot from under me," continued Running Rob, "so I heeled it all the way, knowing how important it was."

Washington ordered the general to return to his command and be ready to march in an hour. General Wayne retired from the presence of the commander-in-chief and hastened to place himself at the head of his men. Just before the army moved, other scouts came in with reports that corroborated the story of Running Rob.

Their horses were reeking with perspiration, each having ridden hard in his effort to be first to carry the news to the commander-in-chief. Never was an army of soldiers more glad to move than was the patriot army on that lovely June morning. They had been many months in camp, suffering from cold and hunger, but now they believed that better things were in store for them. They believed that the time had come when they could strike a telling blow, from which the enemy would not soon recover. The excitement in the ranks was intense, and the veteran officers had a trying time in keeping good order. The patriots entered the city of Philadelphia only a few hours after the enemy left, and were received with glad shouts by the patriot residents. Houses were illuminated and great rejoicing followed. Hundreds of invitations to dine were sent the officers by the best families in the city. But General Washington was fighting for the liberties of the whole country, so had no time to spare in rejoicing with the good patriots of the Quaker City.

"General Wayne," he said to that brave general, "where is your fast runner?"

"Down at my quarters," replied Wayne.

"I want to send him to the front. Such a man is worth his weight in gold just now. Send him to me."

General Wayne sent an orderly in search of Running Rob, with instructions to bring him at once to the commander-in-chief. The orderly hastened to find him, which he did, as he was sitting at supper with a family whose acquaintance he had just made.

"Rob Ransom!" called the orderly, putting his head in at the door. "His excellency wants you."

"I am his," replied Rob, rising. "Good-by, friends, till we meet again. When duty calls, I never wait," and with that he passed out of the door and joined the messenger.

"Where is his excellency?" he asked.

"Up at General Wayne's headquarters."

"Come on, then," and starting off in a run, the orderly was left behind, though he tried in vain to keep pace with him.

Rob shot ahead, and in a few minutes he was in the presence of Washington, hat in hand, awaiting orders.

"General Wayne tells me that you would do me a service," said General Washington, quickly turning to him as soon as he was announced.

"General Wayne never told a lie in his life, your excellency," replied Rob, which brought a

smile to even the anxious face of the commander-in-chief.

"Then you will go? I am glad of it. Hasten after the British army and see where they encamp to-night, and report to me before daylight."

"I'll do it, provided I can get across the river."

"I'll have you carried over in a boat, and keep it there until you return. Will you need a horse?"

"No, your excellency. A horse is too slow, and makes too much noise."

"That's true," and turning to one of his aides, Washington gave the necessary orders about the boat to convey him across the Delaware river.

In another minute Rob was on his way toward the river, where a boat was found belonging to a fisherman. The officer bargained with the fisherman, who was slow and suspicious. The colonel leaped into the boat, very nearly upsetting it, and Rob seized the oars and commenced to pull.

"Hold on! This is my boat!" cried the fisherman, catching hold of the stern and trying to capsize it.

"You can't have it!" cried Rob, leaping into the boat and tossing the fisherman out of it. Then bending to the oars like an old sailor, he sent the little craft scudding over the water like a thing of life.

They soon reached the Jersey shore, when Rob leaped out and turned to the colonel with:

"Have the boat here at midnight," and darted away in the gathering gloom of the night.

The officer knew nothing about rowing a boat, and was indeed in a quandary. A swift tide was running out, and none but a good oarsman could cross it. He made up his mind to wait there himself for the scout, for he was a man whose devotion to his country was such that no hardship was too severe for him. Running Rob, on leaving the bank of the river, struck out on the trail of the British army on a run, or swinging trot, that sent him mile after mile with a speed that would have broken down the best horse in the army in a very few hours. He passed a few timid farmers on the way, who looked upon him as a crazy Continental soldier who was pursuing the whole British army by himself alone. When within ten miles of the rear of the British army, a couple of Tories attempted to stop him.

"Halt!" said one of them, a stout, robust man, planting himself in the middle of the road.

"All right—halt if you want to!" replied Rob, running into and rolling him over in the dust.

The next moment he was out of sight, speeding along the road in the wake of the retreating redcoats.

"There he goes!" cried the other, firing a pistol after him as his comrade struggled to his feet.

CHAPTER III.—"A Witch! Lord Save Me!"

The two Tories started in pursuit, mounting their horses, which were standing in the bushes by the roadside. Soon Running Rob heard the sounds of pursuing horsemen behind him. He stopped to listen.

"There are only two of them," he muttered; "probably those two fellows I met back there in

the road who wanted me to halt. I'll have some fun with them if they are really after me."

He waited for them to come up with him, dodging into the bushes to allow them to pass without seeing him. The moment they passed him he ran out into the road and sped away in pursuit of them. They were going at a swinging gallop, but he found little difficulty in catching up with them. The hindmost one was mounted on a large, powerful, gray horse. Rob came up behind him, seized the crupper, and sprang up behind the Tory with a screech, followed by a spluttering sound like that of a witch's cat.

"Ugh! Oh, Lord, what's that?" yelled the Tory, leaning forward on the horse's mane and digging the spurs deep into his reeking sides.

"Meow—meow—phiz—sputter—sputter!" went Rob, standing on the horse's back and holding on to the terror-stricken Tory's head.

"Help—murder! Oh, Lord, save me—Lord help me! It's a witch—a witch!"

"Ha—ha—ha!" laughed Rob, in a thin, cracked voice to imitate the tones of an old woman. "Yes, I am a witch! Give me a ride—give me a ride—give me a ride—"

"Bubble—bubble—double trouble,
Here's a horse that carries double—"

"Here we go—up and down—up and down—all the way from Camden town!"

In his terror the Tory rolled from the saddle in the dust, leaving our hero in possession of the horse. The other Tory put spurs to his beast and passed ahead, leaving his comrade to the tender mercies of the supposed witch. The gray, now relieved of more than half his load, bounded forward like a whirlwind and soon overtook his companion. Riding up alongside of him, Rob leaped from his saddle to the back of the Tory's horse with a screech and a laugh that made his blood run cold and his hair stand on end. The Tory was paralyzed with fear, but maintained his seat on the horse.

"Halt!" came a stern voice.

Rob looked down and saw that the affrighted horse had plunged into a camp of British soldiers.

"This puts the joke on me," he muttered. "But I'll run it through and see how it will end. Meow—meow!" he screeched, with a fierceness that made the redcoats raise their weapons to defend themselves.

They seized the plunging horse and dragged the two men to the ground. The Tory was taken in hand and made to feel that he was safe. He told the story as the reader has read it, only his terrified imagination clothed our hero with supernatural powers. Running Rob kept up a steady stream of talk. The soldiers supposed him to be insane, and they roared with merriment, some of them actually rolling over on the ground in convulsions. A horse was standing a little way off and Rob made a run and leaped clear over him without touching him.

A murmur of surprise went up from the soldiers, hundreds of whom crowded to the spot. He continued to leap and dance, repeating meaningless incantations, and acting altogether like a maniac just out of some lunatic asylum.

"Put that lunatic outside the line!" commanded

an officer, "and let the men have the sleep they will need for to-morrow's march."

A dozen soldiers sprang forward to seize him. Rob leaped clean over their heads, and dodged about so nimbly that they could not lay hands on him. It afforded them infinite amusement, though, and they chased him about the camp good-naturedly until they at last succeeded in capturing him.

"Now put him outside the line and instruct the guards not to let him pass again!" ordered the officer.

Rob was escorted to the line and there turned loose.

"Now, go! You will be shot if you come back here," said a sergeant. "Do you understand?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" he screeched, darting away at the top of his speed.

"I guess I got the best of that little joke that time," muttered Rob to himself, as he ran. "It was running into a hornets' nest, and but for the old Tory's screaming it would have gone hard with me. That's where they are camping for the night, and I'll have the news at headquarters in less than three hours, or my name is not Rob Ransom."

The pale moon now began to peep over the tree-tops, casting long shadows across the road. He swept along at a swinging gait, that would have created the impression on the mind of a spectator, as he beheld that old, faded, Continental uniform, that he was some phantom of a disordered brain. Such strides, such speed, did not seem possible with any mortal. Mile after mile were passed in rapid succession, and in due time he came in sight of the river. Running Rob looked for the boat that should have been waiting for him, but it was not there. Searching a little farther along the banks of the stream he came upon a boat with oars in it drawn out upon the bank. He launched it and rowed across the stream, then tied it to a tree and made his way to headquarters. Wayne took him to General Washington's tent, where he made his report as to where the enemy were encamped.

Washington ordered the army to advance the next morning upon the enemy's encampment. When the Continentals arrived the camp was deserted. Washington then ordered the pursuit of the enemy, and the patriots forged ahead on the trail. General Clinton's army left a plain trail of burned houses and wanton destruction of all kinds.

Wayne called Running Rob and sent him on a scout to find out what the destiny of the British forces were.

After riding several miles he stopped at a house and asked a pretty miss for a drink, which she graciously gave him. While drinking, who should come out of the house but five redcoats who had been enjoying themselves at the expense of the family. They were more or less drunk, and the girl told Rob that her mother and younger sister were inside frightened half to death, and that she come out of the house in search of help. The redcoats saw Rob in his Continental uniform and made a dive for him. Rob fired at them, killing two. The other three redcoats were too drunk to do much execution and ran towards the back of the house.

The mother and sister now came running out of the house crying that the redcoats had set the house afire, which was proved by a cloud of smoke, which followed them out the door. Rob thought quickly. Running to the mother, he placed her on his horse, then mounted the girls on one of the redcoats horses. Getting upon his horse in front of the mother he took the bridle of the girls' horse and rode out of the yard at a full gallop. Rob asked his companions if there was any family they could go to in their trouble and they told him that a farmer by the name of Seagraves lived about five miles from there who would take them in. They also gave Rob their names as Mrs. Singleton and her two daughters, Effie and Alice. It did not take them long to reach the Seagraves, who was delighted to give them a home. The Seagraves immediately prepared a supper for them and Effie who seemed much taken up with Rob, persuaded our hero to stay as well, which pleased him very much.

CHAPTER IV.—Running Rob Races an Indian.

The meal ended, Running Rob took leave of the Singleton and Seagrave families, mounted his horse and rode away. It was not his intention to return by way of the old Singleton place, as that would place him almost directly in front of the right wing of the British army, whereas he wanted to get to the rear to report to Mad Anthony Wayne. But not being familiar with that part of the country, he took a settlement road that led, as he supposed, in the direction of the patriot camp. Instead of doing so, it led into another road which ran directly to the Singleton place, and the first thing he knew he came upon the smoking ruins of the house.

"Hanged if this isn't a pretty go!" he exclaimed, vexed with himself, as he looked around and recognized several familiar objects. "I am no nearer headquarters than when I left Seagraves'."

While looking on the work of the vandals he imagined he saw a dark object creeping through the bushes. The light from the burning embers revealed it indistinctly. Something told him that danger lurked near—some indescribable feeling—and though he knew no such thing as fear, he thought it prudent to get away, lest he should fall into an ambushade.

He put spurs to his horse and dashed down the main road, which ran directly by the place. The result proved that he had not moved a moment too soon, for his horse had made but two or three bounds when from behind every bush the tufted head of an Indian rose up. Terrific yells, followed by a dozen rifle shots, broke upon the still night air, and the horse rolled in the dust with his rider. But, strange to say, Running Rob was untouched, and when a dozen tawny warriors sprang forward to secure his scalp he arose to his feet, drew his knife and stabbed two of them to the heart ere they were aware that he was really alive. They never dreamed that he would resist so many, even if he were unhurt. But they little knew the terrible energy of the man. As they crowded too close around him he sprang upward, passing clear over their heads and landing in the rear.

Before they could turn to confront him he stabbed two more in the back and then fled. With howls of rage they darted after him, hoping to run him down and get his scalp.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he laughed derisively. "Come on, ye red devils, and show what ye kin do!"

The moon was rising, and a clean race could be had down the road. He kept near enough to them to stimulate their desire to get his hair, and soon their best runners forged ahead of the others, until only three remained in the race. These he allowed to gain on him until they were near enough to throw their tomahawks at him. Then suddenly wheeling, he brought them to bay with a discharge from a pistol in each hand, and two of them bit the dust.

"Ugh!" grunted the third one. "Me take pale-face scalp now!" thinking him at his mercy after having discharged his firearms.

"You will, eh?" replied Bob, catching the up-lifted arm of the savage and wrenching the scalping knife from his hand, thus having him at his mercy.

"Ugh! No take scalp!" grunted the savage, turning to run away.

But Rob bounded after him, caught him by the tuft of hair, and cut it off close to his scalp without hurting him.

"That's your hair, redskin—not mine," he laughingly remarked, as he brushed it across his face.

The savage ran his hand over his shorn scalp in such a ludicrous manner as to cause the scout to roar with merriment. Just then the yells of those who lagged behind were heard. They had followed more leisurely, and now were in sight.

"Come," said Running Rob, seizing the savage by the left ear, "let's give 'em a little race for it!" and pulling vigorously on the ear, the Indian was forced to run with him.

"Brace up, old fellow, and show us what you can do!" and Rob quickened his pace to such a degree that the savage had to do his very best to keep up and save his ear from being pulled off.

Two miles were passed at a speed that taxed the savage's endurance to the utmost, but still Rob kept it up and the race continued. Finally the Indian flagged, flatly refusing to run.

"Getting tired, eh?" asked Rob. "Well, you commenced this thing, and you shall see the end of it. I'll help you—now go it!" and getting behind, he placed his hands on his shoulders and shoved him along.

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian. "What for pale-face run poor Indian?"

"What for poor Indian run the paleface just after killing his horse, eh?" the scout asked.

"Take scalp," was the sententious reply.

"Oh, you did, eh? Well, it seems to me that you didn't get it. How's your scalp, eh?"

"Hair all gone—kill Indian now?"

"No; I am going to run you to death. You must run up to the happy hunting grounds, redskin."

"Ugh; paleface much heap talk."

"You will find that I am heap much run, too! Go along with you!" and shoving him along, Rob forced him to run until he finally fell exhausted to the ground.

"Oh, that's the dodge, is it?" exclaimed Rob, looking down at the prostrate Indian. "Well, it is a good one, but it won't work. I'll show you how we manage chaps like you," and stooping

over him he unfastened his wampum belt and fastened it around his ankles securely. With this he proceeded to drag the savage over the smooth road.

"Ugh! Pale—face—stop—Indian walk!" grunted the savage, trying to keep in a sitting posture as Bob flew along the road with him.

"But I don't want you to walk," said Rob. "I want you to run. No walking for me."

"Indian—run—heap—ugh!—fast!" grunted the savage, as he bounced over several rough places at the rate of about fifteen miles an hour.

"Oh, you had better rest an hour or two."

"Halt, there!" came a sern command, and, looking up, Rob found himself confronted by a British picket.

In the twinkling of an eye he darted into the bushes, leaving the half-dead Indian to the Briton's tender mercy.

"What in thunder does this mean?" cried the picket, glaring down at the prostrate Indian, who scarcely had life enough to groan. "Who are you? Get up, and—why, bless my soul, if it isn't an Indian!"

Calling the corporal of the guard, the sentinel told the story of his stopping a white man in an old faded rebel uniform, running at full speed, dragging a live Indian after him. They untied the Indian's feet and gave him a drink of rum, which revived him sufficiently for him to tell his story.

CHAPTER V.—The Letter—Work of Demons.

On leaving the Indian, Running Rob darted into the bushes and sped away southward, hoping to pass below the extreme end of the right wing of the British army.

"I must get away before the other redskins come up," he muttered, "or they'll give me some trouble."

Threading his way through the bushes, Rob pushed southward, and in a couple of hours was turning the flank of the enemy and speeding toward the camp of the American army, which he reached just before daylight, and made his report to General Wayne. He then sought rest at a farmhouse, where he requested to be allowed to sleep until he woke up himself. He slept during the greater portion of the day, waking up very late in the afternoon, when the patriot army was miles away in pursuit of the enemy. On rising, he found a good dinner, or rather breakfast, awaiting him, which he partook of, and then started off on foot to the surprise of the old farmer. Night overtook him before he caught up with his command, and just before he reached the camp he passed an object that attracted his attention, and he turned to examine it. At first sight it looked very much like a stump, but on second glance the head of a human being was seen. Approaching nearer, he found it to be an Indian squatting on the ground, with his blanket thrown completely over him.

"Hello, redskin!" said Rob, pulling the blanket off him. "What in thunderation are you moping about, eh? Has your gal gone back on you?"

"Ugh!" grunted the savage; "Grey Wolf big Indian no more—scalplock gone!" and the sadness in his tone touched the scout in a tender spot.

"Who got your scalp?"

"Paleface."

"Did you try to take his scalp?"

"Waugh!"

"Oh, that's all right, then. Why in thunder don't you let the palefaces alone?"

"Paleface heap big talk."

"That may be, but I manage to keep my hair on my head," replied Bob, and just then it seemed to him that this might be the one that he dragged by the heels that morning. He had laid his hand on top of his head and felt where the tuft of hair had been cut off close to the scalp.

"See here, Grey Wolf, did the paleface drag you by the heels after taking your scalp?"

"Waugh!"

"And your folks went back on you because your scalp-lock was gone?"

Grey Wolf grunted again.

"Well, it will grow out again, and then you will be another brave. I didn't mean to degrade you, but if you go into the hair-raising business you must expect to take the chances, you know."

That was all very well, but it did not give the disgraced Indian another lock of hair, and he again drew his blanket about him, covered his head, and gave himself up to contemplating the terrible misfortune that had befallen him. Running Rob turned away and left him to his reflections. In another half hour he joined the rear guard of the patriot army and pushed on to General Wayne's headquarters. The advance of the American forces had struck the British rear, and a serious fight had ensued. The result caused great excitement throughout the army.

Every soldier was eager to strike a blow for his country, and the officers could scarcely restrain them. A great battle was impending, and the two armies being about equal in numbers, the issue was doubtful. Many feared that the superior arms and discipline of the enemy would give it the advantage. But the fearless Washington desired to give battle, and to that end called a council of war. To his surprise and regret, only three of his generals agreed with him in his views—Generals Wayne, Greene and Lafayette. The others opposed the proposition to attack and bring on a general engagement. The council broke up without coming to any definite conclusion, and the pursuit continued. As General Wayne was returning to his quarters after the council broke up, he was met by his scout.

"Rob," he said, "there is a messenger at my headquarters waiting to see you."

"Waiting to see me!" exclaimed Rob, in surprise. "Who can it be?"

"Ah, Rob Ransom," said the general, "who is it that tries to draw you away from your duties at this critical moment?"

"I don't know, general. I had the good fortune to save a mother and two daughters from a party of drunken Britishers last night. It may be that this messenger is from one of them."

By this time they had reached the general's headquarters, and there found the messenger. He was a youth of some seventeen years of age, the son of a patriot farmer who lived near the Seagraves, the people with whom Mrs. Singleton and her daughter had found refuge after the destruction of their home.

"There he is," said General Wayne, pointing to the messenger.

"Do you want to see me?" Rob asked, going up to the youth.

"Yes, if you are Running Rob, the scout," replied the youth.

"I'm the man," said Rob.

The youth handed him a letter, which he quickly opened and examined.

It ran:

"Kind Friend: To whom shall we go for help in this hour of peril? Mother wants me to appeal to General Washington, but I know that he has Sir Henry Clinton and the whole British army to look after, and cannot, therefore, turn aside to attend to us. But my heart turns to you, the bravest, swiftest soldier of America, as the one who can come and save us the second time, if you will. A band of Tories, disguised as Indians (and there may be some Indians among them) are burning houses, killing men and carrying away women in the neighborhood; and tonight we have every reason to believe that they intend to pay us a visit. Oh, Heaven send you to our assistance!

In distress,

"EFFIE SINGLETON."

"When did you leave Seagraves's?" Rob asked, turning to the youth.

"About an hour before sunset."

"What is the matter?" asked the general.

Rob handed him the letter, and the brave hero read it. His eyes flashed with indignation as he glanced over the sheet.

"Take as many men as you will need," he said, "and go down there. If you catch a white man in Indian guise, shoot him as you would a wolf."

Rob quickly gathered about a score of old Indian fighters, procured horses, and set out for Seagraves' place, some ten miles away. They rode hard, and in less than an hour and a half were in sight of the burning dwelling of the patriot farmer. The villains had attacked and fired the place.

A brisk ride brought them into the vicinity of the burning dwelling, where they dismounted and concealed their horses in the bushes, with two of their number to guard them. Creeping as near as they could without being seen, they found Mrs. Singleton and her two daughters, Mrs. Seagraves and her daughters, all huddled together, surrounded by a band of painted savages, who were singing and dancing, while others were dividing the plunder of the house between them.

"They are all there in that crowd," whispered the scout to his comrades. "Let's gently surround them and see that no man escapes."

Running Rob ran forward and the others followed. Not one of the savages saw them until they were completely surrounded. Each man seized a savage and blew out his brains with a pistol ere the latter could resist, thus reducing nearly half their number in a single moment. Then, with howls of rage and dismay, the savages sought to cut their way through the patriots, but in vain. Down they went before the terrible sabers of the scouts, until a dozen—all that were left—called for quarter.

They were soon bound hand and foot. Effie

Singleton sprang forward and threw her arms about Running Rob's neck and kissed him.

"Twice you have saved us," she cried, "and I owe you my life, best, bravest, and truest of friends!"

Rob looked into her face, all aglow with joy, and kissed her lips. She was gloriously beautiful, and her arms were around his neck. The others crowded around him and called down the blessings of Heaven on his head.

"My poor husband is killed," sobbed Mrs. Seagraves, "and my home is destroyed; but, thank God, my two daughters are saved from a fate worse than death itself!"

"Had I seen the messenger sooner, I might have saved your husband and home," said Rob sadly. "But I did the best I could."

"Why, here's a white man in Indian war paint!" exclaimed one of the scouts, dragging a painted warrior close to the light where all could get a look at him.

Sure enough, his hair gave him away.

"Hang him to that limb up there!" commanded Rob sternly, pointing to a limb overhead.

The patriots seized the wretch and prepared to run him up.

CHAPTER VI.—The Hour of Vengeance.

"Here is another white man, Mr. Ransom!" called Effie just then.

"Hang him up," cried Rob, "and look for more of the same sort. Such creatures shall never live long in this land, if I can get hold of them!"

"Mercy, mercy!" cried the wretch, as they seized him and dragged him forward. "I will join your army——"

The tightening of the halter cut short his sentence, and he, too, dangled in the air alongside of his comrade.

"Why, there isn't but one Indian among 'em!" cried one of the scouts, who had been examining the prisoners.

"Bring out the real Indian," said Bob, and the genuine savage was brought before him.

"See here, redskin," he said, looking the savage in the eye, "you are a mean, cowardly skunk to make war on women and children. I am going to keep you till all the rest are hung."

Then Rob made arrangements to hang the rest. Such a howling for mercy as went up from those painted wretches was never before heard. They cried, prayed, begged, crawling on their knees, but all in vain. Up they went, and the horrible spectacle of nine men hanging from one tree was then and there witnessed. The six women buried their faces in their hands and could not look upon the scene.

"It is all over, ladies," said Running Rob, approaching Mrs. Seagraves, who was weeping over the loss of her husband and home, "and I have done all I could to avenge your wrongs."

"Alas! vengeance can do me no good," sobbed the widow. "It cannot restore the dead."

"Would that it could, for I would then try to catch and hang a few more of them."

"Now, look here, redskin," said Bob, returning to the Indian, who had stood by, a silent spectator of the hanging, "you have got to fight for your scalp. If you can take mine, you can have

it and go free. But if I can take yours, I shall do it."

"Ugh! Me fight!" said the savage, who had more real courage than any of his recent companions.

"Give him his knife," said Rob.

The scalping knife was handed him, and the savage's eyes glittered with the light of battle as he once more held his favorite weapon in his hand.

"Defend yourself, and look out for your hair!" said Rob, making passes at him.

The Indian uttered a warwhoop that sounded far and wide through the forest and sprang at the brave scout. The women looked on in terrified amazement, for there in the light of the burning home of the Seagraves the scout was fighting a strange duel in their behalf. But, brave as he was, the Indian was no match for the scout. His every thrust was parried, and in return he caught the open palm of the paleface on his copper-colored cheek. Suddenly the scout seized him by the scalplock and jerked him forward; but in a flash he was released.

"There's your scalplock," said Rob, holding a bunch of coarse hair toward him.

The astonished savage ran his hand over his head, and found that his pride and glory was gone—his scalplock was shaved off close to the scalp!

"Kill Indian—cut throat!" and the degraded son of the forest bared his breast and neck to the intrepid scout.

"No, go your way—I don't want to hurt you," and Bob pointed to the forest.

The savage slowly turned away and entered the wood, and the patriots were alone. The sobbing Mrs. Seagraves and her daughters touched the hearts of Running Rob and his brave comrades. They well knew the terrible loss they had sustained, and therefore did not intrude upon their grief until the time came for them to move. Upon consultation with Mrs. Singleton it was decided to carry the ladies to Allentown, where both had friends and relatives who would give them shelter until the storm should pass. Gathering up such valuables as the villains had intended to take with them, the little party placed the ladies on horseback, finding horses enough in the stable to carry them, and set out for the headquarters of the army. Effie Singleton rode by the side of the scout, and never tired of talking with him.

"And this is war," she said. "I never wanted to be a man until to-day, and now I am ready to thank God that I am a woman."

"I am glad, also, that you are a woman," said Rob, in a low tone of voice.

She blushed crimson in spite of her efforts to appear calm, but the darkness prevented her tell-tale blushes from being seen. They soon reached the army, and passed through the camp to Allentown, which place they reached just after sunrise, and were joyfully received by their relatives. It was there that Mrs. Singleton met with her husband, who was trying to get back to his home from Trenton. He had not heard of the destruction of his residence until his wife told him of it.

"Mr. Ransom saved us from being burned with it," said Alice Singleton, the younger daughter, pointing to Rob, as she spoke.

"Is that so?" the husband and father asked, grasping the scout's hand.

"Yes, father," said Effie. "We owe our lives to Mr. Ransom."

"You have my eternal gratitude, sir," said the farmer, tears coming into his eyes, "for I can cheerfully give up everything for them."

"Father, it is Running Rob who——"

"What! Running Rob!" exclaimed the farmer, seizing him with both hands. "Mad Anthony's scout? Why, God bless me, sir, I feel like I had known you all my life!"

"I am glad to hear you say so, sir," said Rob good-naturedly, "for you have enough to bear without being encumbered with new acquaintances. I must leave you now to return to——"

"Not until you have had some breakfast," interrupted Effie.

"You seem to have command here, at any rate," said Rob, with a merry twinkle in his eye.

"Yes," she said, "and I mean to be obeyed, too," and taking his hat, she carried it into another room and hung it up.

Then, with a truly domestic spirit, she set about assisting the hostess in preparing the breakfast, which was soon ready for the hungry party. The meal ended, Running Rob prepared to return to camp.

"You will come and see us again?" Effie Singleton asked.

"Yes, whenever I can. But I may not get through the coming battle, you know."

Effie turned deathly pale at his words.

"You will be spared," she almost whispered, scarcely daring to speak aloud.

"I hope so."

"I have two brothers in the army, you know," she murmured. "I shall pray for them and you."

"Then I shall be spared, I know," and Rob raised the trembling little hand to his lips and kissed it.

Without another word he turned away and was gone. Effie Singleton's face beamed with happiness as she looked after his tall form, murmuring:

"He loves me! He loves me! He kissed my hand."

"When the scout caught up with the army they were pushing close on the heels of the retreating enemy. General Wayne heard his report with satisfaction.

The retreat and pursuit now became exciting as the van of one army now pressed close to the rear of the other, and frequent skirmishes took place. Scouting was no longer necessary, now that the two armies were so close together, and Bob was therefore allowed to have a band of skirmishers with him, in order to annoy and harass the enemy as much as possible. With these, armed to the teeth, he hung upon the flank of the British army with such dogged pertinacity that frequent parties were sent to crush him. But he was in the crushing business himself, and took a hand in it. The first encounter he had was with a detachment of British cavalry, which charged upon him as if they expected to see him run at sight of them. But, though he was known as Running Rob, he did not do that sort of running. On the contrary, he received the charge like a stone wall, and the redcoats were hurled back with terrible slaughter.

"Down with the redcoats!" cried Rob, and down they went—the half of them killed or wounded, and the others were glad to get away from the terrible band of rebels.

Two of his men had fallen, and Rob and the others buried them on the spot with military honors. That night Rob was sent with his scouts on a tour of observation on the left flank of the enemy. They went off in glorious spirits, knowing that Running Rob would stir up some fun before they returned, and they were not doomed to disappointment. There being nothing in front to oppose them, the redcoats swept across the country like an irresistible avalanche, carrying dismay into the hearts of the people. The appearance of a small but determined band of patriots in their front caused the British officers to laugh, and not a few desired to go forward with a squadron and capture them. But Running Rob was not the man to stop long enough in one place to be gobbled up by an overwhelming force of the enemy. It was late in the night when they came upon a little settlement of something like a dozen houses, the inhabitants of which were all staunch patriots. It was a sort of cross-roads postoffice place, where there was a country tavern.

"Halt!" cried Rob, on seeing nearly a score of horses in front of the tavern. "There are some redcoats here to-night, or I am greatly mistaken. Wait here until I come back," and slipping out of his saddle, he crept forward to the tavern and peeped into the window.

To his surprise, there were two British officers and about twenty soldiers in there, all more or less under the influence of strong drink, which they had been drinking at the bar. In one corner of the room sat an old negro man, who kept up a continual assault on a dilapidated old fiddle, while in the center of the room were the landlord's three daughters and two servants, dancing with the officers and soldiers. The poor girls' faces were like those of dead persons, instead of gay revelers. They had been dragged into the barroom and made to dance with them under threats of worse treatment at the hands of the half-drunken wretches.

CHAPTER VII.—The Scouts Dance.

Rob crept away from the window and rejoined his men, to whom he explained the situation.

"Dismount, all of you," he said, in a low tone, "and ten of you stay here to take care of the horses."

The division was soon made, and about thirty quietly followed him down to the tavern. Placing two at each window and five at the door, Rob and his men quietly entered the room as spectators, unnoticed by the revelers, all of whom were either drinking or dancing.

"Hello, by Jove!" cried one of the redcoats, after the lapse of one or two minutes, "here's a rebel come to the dance!"

"Don't stop, gentlemen—go on with the dance," said Rob, in a careless tone. "Don't let us disturb your festivities."

"By Jove, but who—who are you, anyway?" demanded the British captain, drawing his sword.

"I am Running Rob of the American Army," was the bold reply, "and if you don't hand over that sword you are a dead rascal!" and the Briton was immediately covered by half a dozen pistols.

He hesitated as to his course.

"I have men enough to put you through. Will you surrender or fight?"

Bang! went a pistol, and a dead Briton rolled on the floor, having attempted to escape through a window.

"I will surrender!" said the officer, giving up his sword.

"Whoop—glory hallelujah!" cried the landlord, embracing his family in the exuberance of his joy.

"God bless you, man!" cried the jolly boniface. "Just help yourself. Here's sweetness for all the patriots in the Jerseys. Hurrah for Washington! Down with King George!"

The scouts made the welkin ring with their shouts, and in a few minutes every redcoat was secured. The dead Britisher was carried outdoors and the jolly landlord placed his best liquor at the disposal of the patriots, who drank freely of the warming beverage. The landlord's daughters, bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked buxom lasses, gave each and every one in the scout's band a hug and a kiss.

"Now let's have a dance as will be a dance!" cried Rob, seizing the tallest of the three daughters by the waist and leading her out into the center of the room. "But hold on—give me a glass of spiced rum, landlord," and taking the glass to the trembling old fiddler, said: "How are you, old man? Are you a patriot or a kingsman?"

"Afore God, massa, I's a bad rebel all over!" replied the old negro.

"You are a pretty good fiddler, so take this poison and give us some more music."

Instantly the five buxom lasses joined in and danced with the bronzed patriots. A Continental uniform was all the introduction needed, and the joyous ardor with which they danced attested their patriotism. Oh, how the fair beauties and brave men enjoyed that unalloyed hour of pleasure! The redcoats looked on with scowls and frowns, and one of them was so indiscreet as to make a disparaging remark about one of the girls, and was promptly knocked down by a patriot.

"Now let's have a stag dance," said Rob, as he led his partner, pretty Sarah Campbell, to a seat near the bar.

"A stag dance!" she exclaimed. "What's that?"

"A dance by men alone!"

"Oh," and she laughed heartily, "there isn't any fun in that!"

"Wait and see," said Rob, leaving her; and he went over to where the prisoners were held under guard, and said:

"Here, captain, come out here! You made these poor girls dance for you just now; now come out and dance for them."

"I decline your polite invitation, sir," said the indignant Briton, bowing stiffly.

But Rob insisted, and the British officer turned pale as death. Here was a humiliation his proud spirit revolted at. But the threat of one hundred lashes on his bare back would be still more

humiliating, and he looked appealingly to the old negro fiddler, who struck up a regular breakdown. The officer began to dance, and the patriots jeered him. The women screamed with laughter, and at last Rob joined in and danced with him, throwing his nimble foot clear over the Briton's head, now and then gently lifting him under his coat-tail with the other. The officer wanted to stop, but Rob reminded him of the whip if he did, and nearly a whole hour was spent in watching the grotesque scene.

"Now stop," said Rob, "and let the other officer of King George come in."

The other officer could do no better than the preceding one, but he danced for those whom he had so brutally treated but an hour or two before. Suddenly the clear notes of a cavalry bugle were heard, and the dancing ceased.

"To your horses, men!" cried Running Rob; "and if a prisoner pulls back or tries to escape, shoot him down!"

By the most adroit management Rob succeeded in getting away from the tavern with his prisoners and delivering them to General Wayne the next morning.

Now, one of the daughters of the old tavern keeper where Rob had been the preceding night, Sarah Campbell by name, had fallen in love with Rob at first sight. She resolved dress up in men's clothes and try to join Running Rob's scouts. Her disguise fitted her so well that she succeeded in passing the closest scrutiny after having arrived at General Wayne's camp. She also, upon seeking the general's quarters, got his permission to become attached to Running Rob's attachment.

About this time the famous scout had rescued a girl from a band of Tories who had her prisoner. At the time Rob did not know what to do with her after he rescued her. She persisted that she wanted to act as cook for the scouts, and Rob finally consented after having had Wayne's permission. So the girl, whose name was Jane Baldwin, was attached to Rob's command.

CHAPTER VIII.—An Important Capture.

The scouts were justly proud of the addition to their number, and resolved to show how well they appreciated the brave girl's courage and devotion to the cause of liberty. Running Rob's scouts were sent out by Wayne to find out the whereabouts of the enemy they were closely following. As the scouts neared the Passaic, above Newark, they began to look for a place to cross to the other side. But they were compelled to go farther up, to where an old farmer, a staunch patriot, kept a small boat for his own use. The old patriot was at first suspicious of them, and would not admit that he had a boat.

"Look here," said Rob, "I am one of General Wayne's scouts, and want to get over the river to-night, so bring out your boat and put us over."

The old farmer, who had been imposed upon by two Britishers in a similar manner the week before, still doubted him. But his eyes sparkled as he said:

"If you are really Continentals, you can not only get across to-night, but catch some Britishers besides."

"How? Tell me!" demanded Rob, deeply interested.

"Three miles above here is a house where three British officers are visiting a Tory family, and they are disguised, but I know them, though it is so close to New York that it would be death to me to say or do anything."

"Well, I'll do something," said Rob, "and if you are sending me on a fool's errand I'll duck you seven times in the river when I come back."

"I am telling you the truth," said the patriot, "though I don't know whether you be friend or foe."

Hurriedly ordering his men to mount, Running Rob dashed up the river road at a headlong pace till he came in sight of the house. It was now night. They dismounted, and leaving two of their number to guard the horses and take care of the young maiden, they quietly proceeded to surround the house. Through an open window he saw an elderly man, evidently the father of the family, surrounded by four women—one an elderly woman, and three younger ones, evidently her daughters—and three stalwart men in plain citizen's clothes. The men were courting the girls, and it was quite evident that the girls were willing to be courted—in fact, they seemed to like it, for their eyes were bright and their faces beamed with happiness. Running Rob went back to his men and hurriedly whispered his instructions.

"I will go in alone," he said, "and ask for accommodations for the night, while you can remain within sound and sight for an emergency."

He then went to the door and knocked for admittance.

"I am a traveler, sir," said Rob, in respectful tones. "My horse fell dead on the road, and I am afoot in a strange part of the country. I seek entertainment for the night, for which I am both able and willing to pay."

"Come in, sir, and let us get a look at you," said the old Tory. "These are times when men have entertained devils unawares."

Rob stepped into the house and confronted the host. At sight of his old faded Continental uniform, the three men who were courting the three daughters, arose to their feet and surrounded him.

"Where are you from, sir?" the host asked.

"I am from Connecticut, sir, and am on my way to Virginia on important private business."

The three men exchanged significant glances with the host, who nodded his head and said:

"Of course we can give you food and shelter for the night. We could not think of turning you away. Be seated, sir—these are my wife and daughters, sir."

Rob bowed politely and took a seat.

"Do you belong to the army, sir?" one of the men asked, eyeing the intruder closely.

Rob looked up at him and remarked:

"Times are too unsettled to answer such a question as that. If you will be civil to me, I'll be civil to you. That's my motto."

The three men looked at the host and whispered among themselves.

"You have on a rebel uniform, sir," said the elder of the three men sternly.

"Yes, an old one which has been well worn. I

travel in it because it does not subject me to much suspicion where I am going."

"You are a rebel, sir!"

"Oh, no!"

"Yes, you are—and you are my prisoner!"

"Oh, thunder! Mister, don't you go to making trouble here now."

"There won't be any trouble at all, sir," said the man quietly, drawing a pistol and placing the muzzle against his head, "unless you force me to blow your brains out."

"I won't do that!"

"Don't shoot him!" pleaded the youngest of the three girls.

"Do you surrender, sir?"

"Who shall I surrender to?"

"To Captain Lovell, of the British army."

"You don't tell me so! Why, captain, how are you? Glad to see you, by Jove!" and with that Rob extended his hand to the astonished Briton.

"Who are you, sir?" demanded the captain.

"I am Running Rob, Mad Anthony Wayne's scout," was the reply.

"You are, eh? Well, Mad Anthony will be quite mad now, won't he?"

"I don't know that he will, though he is very cross at times."

"What are you doing here?" the captain asked.

"Listening to the words of wisdom that fall from your lips," answered Rob. "I suppose you will tell us what you are doing here in citizen's clothes?"

"That's my business," was the stiff reply. "It is for me to ask questions and you to answer them."

"Is that so? Well, ask me as many as you please."

"I don't wish to ask you any. Can you get us a rope, Miss Julia?"

"Yes," and one of the sisters ran out of the room to get it.

She returned in a few moments, bringing a rope long enough to tie a dozen men.

"Why, that's enough to tie three men," said Rob, laughing. "Just what I wanted."

"What you wanted?"

"Yes; it takes just that much rope for me," and giving a sharp, shrill whistle, the scout leaped aside and drew his own pistol.

The next moment the door was thrown open and six men rushed in, leveling their pistols at the three astounded men.

"Sold!" gasped the captain, turning pale.

"Badly sold," said Rob.

In a few minutes the three officers were bound so that they could have been left alone without a guard without any danger of their escaping.

CHAPTER IX.—Pursued.

The three prisoners secure, Rob turned his attention to the old farmer, who had wisely refrained from saying anything during the capture of his guests.

"So you are a king's man, eh?" Rob asked.

"Yes," he said frankly. "It's useless to deny it, I suppose."

"Yes—worse than useless," remarked Rob. "But don't you feel ashamed of yourself for plotting against your country?"

"No more than you do for fighting against your king," was the reply.

"I have nothing to do with the king, nor he with me. God never intended that I should be born a slave to another man. Let King George earn his bread by the sweat of his brow, as I do. He has no right to rule over me against my consent."

"There we differ," said the Tory, "and always will. But what will you do with me?"

"I shall leave you here on parole until General Washington comes, which he will do in a few days, and leave the case in his hands."

"Thank you. I shall stay right here and wait for his orders."

"You must give us accommodations for the night," said Rob.

"We will do our best to make you comfortable, sir," said the host, who knew that he was in the power of the scouts.

Two rooms were offered them, but Rob said they would set a guard around the house, and the rest would sleep on the floor of the front room where they were, to which the host made no objections. But when Jane Baldwin entered, escorted by young Bartly, the young ladies flew to her, begging that she would use her influence to save the prisoners. She explained her position with the scouts in a very few words, at which they sympathized with her, and one of them invited her to share her room with her, which she did. The next morning Rob sent the prisoners back with two more of his men, which left him only six of his original number; sending a letter to General Wayne, he explained the circumstances of the capture of the prisoners. The two young ladies—Jane and the youngest daughter of the house, became fast friends during the night, and for the sake of the kind treatment, Rob relieved their fears as to the fate of the prisoners.

"They are simply prisoners of war," he said, smiling, "so you need not trouble yourselves about them."

"Then why did you put the disgrace of binding them like slaves upon them?" the eldest daughter asked, her eyes snapping.

"Will you please explain to me how that rope came into the room where we were?" he asked.

"Why, I brought it there myself," she replied.

"For what purpose?"

She looked down and made no reply.

"To bind me with," he added, "and if the fate of war put it upon their limbs instead of mine, what right have you or they to object?"

She made no reply.

"But they are officers," said the youngest sister.

"Would a commission in my pocket make me any more of a man than I am at present?" he asked.

That silenced them.

"Now, my dear young ladies, unless you all want to go to England to live, you had better send these British sweethearts of yours to the right-about, for General Washington and the Continental army are going to drive 'em out of the country, and rule it themselves."

"I am not so sure of that," said the eldest daughter, who was a thorough loyalist. "The British army can never be conquered."

A lady's saddle was procured for Jane Baldwin, and a pair of holsters, into which the captain's pistols were placed.

"I am now ready for war," she said, as Running Rob lifted her into the saddle, "and woe unto the foe that gets in my way!"

"Indeed! I shall have to ask permission of General Washington to raise an army of Amazons."

"Hist!" she said. "What's that?"

The clear notes of a cavalry bugle were heard from below.

"To horse—to horse!" cried Running Rob, springing into the saddle, "and follow me!"

As they pressed forward they overtook the two scouts who were escorting the three captive officers back to Washington's army.

"Take to the woods and push across the country!" commanded Rob to those in charge of the prisoners, "for we don't know if they be friends or foes."

The two scouts quickly obeyed, and in another moment they were lost in the great forest that stretched back from the river for many miles. Down the road dashed the scouts till they reached the fork of the road, where they halted and waited the appearance of the force they had heard. Presently they appeared—a squadron of redcoat cavalry. They saw each other about the same time.

"Charge!" cried the officer in command, putting spurs to his gallant charger and dashing headlong at the little party of scouts, with his entire command at his heels.

"Take to the woods—all of you!" cried Rob, and the others dashed into the woods, while Rob turned his horse's head down the road.

The entire squadron dashed after him, and Rob put his horse to his level best. The race was an even one for nearly ten miles, by which time they began to gain on him. Loud and long rang the cheers of the redcoats as they saw his horse weakening, for they fully expected to have him a prisoner within another mile or two. But they were never more mistaken in their lives, for just as they expected to seize him he leaped from his horse and shot forward like a rocket, leaving them behind.

"By Jove!" exclaimed the British leader, "the fellow is the best runner I ever saw, but, of course, he can't expect to outrun our horses, tired as they are. Charge! Run him down, men!"

They did charge—as furiously as their horses could carry them, but Running Rob kept ahead of them most provokingly. The jaded horses of the pursuers were now nearly played out, and the commander of the squadron was furious.

"Run him down, men! Kill every horse, if necessary, but catch that insolent rebel at all hazards! Ten pounds to the man who first lays hands on him!"

Thus stimulated, the redcoats exerted every energy they could bring to bear to overtake the flying footman, but in vain. One by one they lagged behind until only three continued the pursuit—the captain and two of his men, who were mounted on powerful horses. Up and down hill Running Rob ran, feeling not the least fatigued by the exercise. He overtook a man on horseback traveling leisurely along.

"Why do you run so?" the stranger asked.

"I am pursued," was the reply.

"By whom?"

"The British—there they come now!" and Rob forged ahead at a rapid pace as the redcoats hove in sight around a bend in the road. The stranger looked back and saw the pursuers coming, and at first seemed inclined to fly also, but in another minute the British captain was by his side.

"Halt!" cried the officer, leveling a pistol at his head.

The stranger instantly checked his horse and glared at the officer.

"Did you see a man running this way?" asked the captain, in hurried tones.

"I did. He is running straight ahead, sir," replied the traveler.

"Dismount and exchange horses with me!" commanded the captain.

"I beg your pardon, but——"

"Dismount, I say!" and the excited Briton raised his pistol as if to fire if his order was not promptly obeyed.

The traveler dismounted, and the officer sprang to the ground.

"Take my horse!" he cried, as he leaped into the stranger's saddle. "Forward, men—charge!" and putting spurs to the gallant steed, he dashed off at such a pace as to leave the other two far behind.

Rob looked back after running another mile or two and saw the iron-gray horse of the stranger he had passed coming at full speed, apparently as fresh as though just from his stall.

"Oh, you have swapped horses, have you, my fine fellow!" he muttered. "Well, I'll let you come up and see what you have to say for yourself."

On came the British captain, now out of sight of his men, confident of an easy capture.

"Halt, you rebel!" he cried, as he came within pistol shot of our hero.

Rob darted behind a huge tree, drew his pistol and covered the Briton with it.

"I guess you'd better halt, yourself, captain," he said, as the Briton dashed up within a few paces of the tree.

Bang—bang! went both pistols of the captain, and the bullets actually knocked the bark off the tree within a few inches of Rob's face.

"Ha—ha—ha!" laughed Rob, stepping out from behind the tree and seizing the horse's bit with one hand, leveling a pistol at his rider with the other. "Dismount, quick, or you are a dead man!"

Rob compelled him to take off his coat, hat, and boots. Just then the two other pursuers hove in sight.

"Good-by, captain," said Rob, taking the hat, coat, and boots along with him. "I think you would rather I had killed you, but really I had not the heart to do it. Give my love to King George—the fool!" and with that he darted off again, leaving the dumfounded captain standing hatless, bootless, and coatless in the road.

The despoiled captain swore till the air was sulphurous, as he saw the daring scout disappearing and his disgrace coming on.

"What's the matter, captain?" cried the foremost of his men, dashing up to his assistance.

"Did you catch him, captain?" asked the traveler, who had ridden fast with the two cavalry-

men, in the hope of regaining possession of his horse.

The irate captain instantly requested him to go where winters are never known.

"By the eternal!" he roared. "I'll have that man dead or alive, or I am a dead man myself! Here, give me two pairs of pistols, quick!"

The two men gave up their pistols, each taking an empty one of the captain's. Thus armed, the captain sprang into the saddle again, and dashed off in pursuit of his despoiler. The two men and the traveler did their best to keep up with him, but their jaded steeds were unequal to the task. They were soon left behind, and the iron gray bore his rider to the flying footman.

Running Rob saw him coming, and knew that, stung by the disgrace that had been put upon him, the Briton would fight desperately. He accordingly dropped the hat, coat, and boots in the middle of the road, and stood over them as if to defend them. The enraged Englishman charged upon him at full speed, and Rob had to spring aside to avoid being run over. That sudden leap saved his life, for, as he dashed by the captain fired almost in his face, the bullet cutting a lock of hair from his head. The captain then wheeled to make another charge—not dreaming that his enemy was now charging him—and found Rob at his side. Quick as a flash Rob saw the other two pistols, and knew that his life was in danger. He raised his pistol, and placing it against the captain's side, said:

"Life or death—which?"

CHAPTER X.—The Escape.

Even in his desperation the British captain saw his danger—that he was facing certain death.

"Life," he said.

"Very well—get down, then—quick!"

Gathering up the four pistols and the hat, coat, and boots, Rob darted into the bushes just in time to escape the bullets of the two redcoats sent after him. Rob ran directly back whence he came, keeping the woods between him and the enemy. But the rage of the British captain at having been so treated by one man was overpowering. He raved and swore, cursing the day he was born; for the disgrace of having been captured and stripped of his uniform by a rebel scout was a disgrace that was even worse than defeat and death.

"He had a dozen confederates running along in the bushes," he said to his three listeners, "who ran out and seized me when I overtook him each time. He ran along the road as a decoy."

The stranger smiled and said:

"I didn't see any one in the woods when he ran past me."

"Of course not; they were after nobler game."

"And they got it, too, it seems."

"Arrest that man—he is in the plot!" cried the captain, in a towering rage.

The two cavalymen turned and seized him.

"I surrender," said the man, smiling. "I am totally unarmed."

The captain gave orders for a return to his command, and the stranger was carried with

them. But on the way back the proud Briton thought it would be dangerous to his reputation to take the stranger back, as he had seen too much and could tell too much for his reputation. What, then, should he do with him? To kill him would be unjustifiable murder, which he shrank from committing. At last he hit upon a plan.

"Halt!" he cried.

The three halted.

"Dismount!"

They dismounted.

"I want you to exchange clothes with me," he said, turning to the traveler, "as I am going to follow that fellow up, and have him dead or alive."

"Well, captain, I can't help myself," said the man, "but you don't seem to have clothes enough to make a fair ex——"

"Take off your clothes, sir!" commanded the captain sternly, "and get back into the bushes there—out of the road!"

All four moved from the road into the bushes, when the exchange was completed in which the traveler was left hatless, coatless, and bootless. The captain then ordered his men to remount and ride back to meet their command, himself leading the way, leaving the traveler alone by the roadside with the jaded horse in lieu of his own gallant iron-gray. The stranger gazed after the retreating Britons as long as he could see them, and then sadly turned to the panting steed with:

"Well, I suppose you are my horse, though much against my will; but I hope you have as good bottom as my——"

"I say, stranger!" called a voice from behind him, "he was rather rough on you, eh?"

The stranger turned at the first sound of the voice, and found himself face to face with Running Rob.

"Why, you are the man they were chasing!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I'm the very identical chap," said Rob, laughing, "but they didn't catch me, did they?"

"The captain caught you, didn't he?"

"Oh, he got near enough to give me these, just for a little fun," and as he spoke he held up the hat, coat, boots and pistols for the stranger to view.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the man. "But how did you manage to overcome him twice?"

"Strategy, sir—strategy."

"And a little fast running, too, I should say," said the stranger. "Why, I never saw such running in my life! Do you know, he said a dozen rebels darted out of the woods to help you disarm him!"

"Thunderation! Did he say that?"

"Yes, and the two soldiers believed it."

"But you did not?"

"I knew better than that—ha, ha!"

"I will let 'em know better before I am done with 'em," said Rob significantly. "But, look here, can't you wear these clothes in place of those he has taken from you?"

"What! Wear a British uniform?"

"Yes. Why not?"

"Because I am not in the British army, and there are too many people on the lookout to get a shot at a redcoat—no—no—excuse me!"

Rob laughed heartily.

"I see you are a sensible man, whatever your politics may be."

"I am a patriot, my friend," said the man gravely.

"I am glad to hear that. You can't travel in the fix you are in, you know."

"It would be very inconvenient for me to do so."

"Of course it would. Here, put this hat on and go with me—these boots, too, will just fit you."

"But where are you going?" the man asked.

"I am going back in search of a few friends who were with me when those redcoats charged on me."

"But where are they?"

"Somewhere in the woods, I guess," said Rob, with a broad smile.

"I think I had better keep on my journey," said the man. "I can purchase more clothes in Trenton."

"Just as you please," replied Rob. "If you desire to do so. I am not the one to interfere with a traveler. You can keep the boots and hat as a present from Running Rob, Mad Anthony Wayne——"

"Running Rob!" exclaimed the man, in real surprise, gazing at the scout.

"Yes, that's my name," said Rob, smiling.

"Rob Ransom—the scout?"

"The same," and Rob began to eye the man with no little interest. "Who are you, sir?"

"I am Josiah Singleton, whose brother's family you saved from the British and Indians. My niece Effie wrote me all about you!" and the two men clasped hands as two friends would after a long separation.

"I am glad I met you—though sorry I was the cause of your losing your horse and clothes," said Rob.

"That is not so bad as it might have been," and Mr. Singleton laughed heartily. "The captain will suffer more in mind and reputation than I will. Ha, ha, ha!"

After an hour's conversation the two men parted, Singleton to go on his way and the scout to hunt up the friends he had separated from in the early part of the day.

On his way back to his command, the British captain took the two privates into his confidence, and bribed them not to say anything about his disgrace at the hands of the famous scout. It was not a difficult thing to do when we think of the rigid discipline of the British army, an officer having it in his power to make the existence of a private soldier almost insupportable. When he reached his command, he reported that he had been suddenly surrounded and captured by a score of rebels—after killing half a dozen of their number—that they stripped him of his uniform and were going to hang him, when he sprang away, leaped on a horse near by, leaving his own gallant steed behind. Of course, the two privates confirmed his story in such a manner as to make it appear plausible, and it was, therefore, believed. He was declared a hero under such circumstances. In the meantime Running Rob was making his way back toward the spot whence he came, keeping well in the woods on either side of the road. When within a few miles of the place where young Bartly and the

others had taken to the woods, he turned across the country, hoping either to see or hear of them or else strike their trail. Stopping at a farmhouse to get a drink of water, he heard of his scouts through a hired man.

"Yes," said the man, in response to a question, "I saw them, and they had two redcoats and a woman with them."

"They are the ones I am in search of," said Rob. "Can you tell me which way they went?"

"They went across that way," replied the man, pointing across some old fields. "There's a road over there on the other side, which runs down by the lime spring, which they will reach about sunset. Shouldn't wonder if they camped there to-night. But tell me, stranger, do you belong to the Continentals?"

"Yes, I belong to Washington's army."

"Were you at Monmouth when that big battle was fought?" the man eagerly asked.

"Yes."

"You don't say so! Did General Washington really whip Sir Henry?"

"I think he did—anyhow, Sir Henry sneaked away in the night, leaving his dead and dying on the field."

"Glory be to God!" said the man, in a low tone of voice, looking as if afraid some one would hear him.

"You are a patriot, then?"

"Yes; but they"—and he pointed over his shoulder with his thumb—"are all loyalists—Tories."

"Is that so?"

"Yes."

"How many men are there?"

"Three—father and two sons-in-law."

"And you?"

"Only a hired man—a farmhand."

Rob looked toward the house, and at that moment saw two men coming from the rear of it.

"That's the father and one son-in-law," whispered the hired man.

The two men came up by the well where Rob had been quenching his thirst and talking with the hired man. Rob had the brilliant uniform coat of the British captain still in his possession, and the old Tory glanced suspiciously at it as he came up.

"Halloo! What's up?" was the abrupt question of the Tory, addressed to his hired man.

"The stranger stopped to get a drink of water and inquire the way to Princeton."

"You are going to Princeton, eh?" to Rob.

"Yes," replied the boy, simply to relieve the hired man.

"Where from?"

"Above."

"Whereabouts above?"

"Up on the Passaic."

"That's a king's officer's coat you have there."

"Yes."

"Whose is it?"

"Mine," was the cool reply.

"Yours! Are you a king's officer?"

"No."

The Tory looked keenly at him a moment or two, and remarked:

"I don't understand you."

"I suppose not, as it is my business and not yours."

"You are a rebel thief—you stole that coat, sir!" blurted out the old Tory.

But the last word had scarcely passed his lips ere a blow between the eyes laid him out at full length on the ground.

"Shame on you, to strike an old man!" cried the son-in-law, in doubt about taking a hand in it himself before the old man could get on his feet.

"Let the old fool keep a civil tongue in his head, then," retorted Rob. "I'd wring King George's nose were he to call me a thief."

"Ten thousand devils!" roared the old Tory, rising to his feet and glaring at the scout, "I'll flay you alive for that—here, Jim—Tom—seize him—bind him!"

The son-in-law attempted to aid the old man, but got knocked senseless for his pains.

"Here, old man!" cried Rob. "If you don't apologize, I'll whip you till you beg for mercy!"

"You can't do it—I'll throw you in the well!" and the old man clinched with him.

"Oh, the well, eh? That will do just as well as the whipping," and lifting him up as he would a child, Rob dropped him over feet foremost into the well.

He went down with a shriek that was heard nearly a mile away, and brought the women out of the house in a panic. The two married daughters came rushing out, shrieking:

"Murder—murder! What's the matter, Jim?"

The son-in-law, Jim, shared the same fate, and down he went, shrieking, to join his father-in-law. The well was not very deep. The hired man rushed up to Rob, whispering:

"Throw me in, too, or I'll be suspected."

Rob laughed and took hold of him. The fellow resisted manfully, but finally went down on top of the others with a yell. With wild screams all the women on the place ran at Rob with broom handles, mops, sticks, and axes.

"This is getting hot," he said, dodging a blow from a big stick in the hands of Jim's wife, a pretty black-eyed young woman of some twenty years. "Give us a kiss, lass, and I'm off!"

He caught her around the waist, picked up the captain's coat, and started off on a run with her, carrying her under his arm as if she were only an infant.

"Help! Help! Murder! Let me go!" she shrieked, with the mother, sister, and maid-servants in chorus and hot pursuit.

Rob ran with all his might, and in two or three minutes was out of sight, with the terrified young woman under his arm. He stopped and stood her on her feet.

"You see what comes of being a Tory," he said pleasantly. "General Washington has got ten thousand men just like me. Give me a kiss and promise to be a good little patriot always, and I'll let you go back to your mamma!"

The terrified young wife threw her arms around his neck and gave him a dozen kisses right in the mouth.

"Those are sweet and good," he said. "Now, mind; be a good little rebel, or I'll come some day, take you away forever, and eat you out in the woods—now run home and tell your mamma."

She ran with the speed of a deer—fear lending wings to her feet, and Running Rob rolled over on the grass in convulsive laughter.

CHAPTER XI.—Rob Rejoins the Scouts.

Running Rob resumed his journey in search of his comrades. It was quite late in the afternoon when he struck the trail, and inquiries from an old negress convinced him that he was only a few miles behind them. Night came on, and he pushed forward to reach the spring, where he felt sure he would find them encamped. True to the letter were the words of the old Tory's hired man, for Rob found young Bartly and his friends encamped at the spring. Creeping up as close to the campfire as he could without risking a bullet, he watched and listened, greatly amused at young Bartly's attentions to Jane Baldwin, who still remained with them.

"The sly young dog!" muttered Rob, as he watched them, "he is trying to do double duty."

"I wonder where Running Rob is now?" he heard one of the scouts ask.

"Oh, I guess he got away all right," answered another.

"Not unless he was mounted on a very fleet horse," remarked one of the prisoners, a British captain, "for there were some very fine horses in that squadron, as I happen to know."

"You forget that Running Rob can outrun any horse in America."

"Impossible!" exclaimed the prisoner who had spoken.

"By no means," said one of the scouts. "I have known Running Rob to run one hundred miles in twenty-four hours, and——"

"Why not say five hundred?" interrupted the incredulous Briton. "That would make it something grand."

"Oh, you redcoats don't know anything about running or walking," laughingly replied the scout, who was exceedingly good-natured.

"Maybe not," retorted the prisoner, "but it is not for the want of experience, for we have been chasing you rebels all over the country for the last three years."

"Yes, I know. Sir Henry Clinton has just chased Washington from Philadelphia to New York, keeping ahead of him all the way."

The scouts burst into a roar of laughter, and the officer's face turned as red as his scarlet uniform.

"I am quite sure he got away," said Bartly, "for he could have dodged into the woods and made his escape with very little trouble."

"I'll bet he made trouble enough for them before he did, though," remarked another.

"Oh, I do hope he got away as well as we did!" said Jane Baldwin. "He is so brave and kind and good-natured."

"Maybe you are in love with him," said Bartly jestingly.

"Maybe I'm not, sir!" she replied, with spirit. "But maybe it's none of your business if I am."

"Good—good!" laughed the others. "Give it to him! He's only jealous, that's all!"

"I beg your pardon," said Bartly, "but I did not mean to offend you. I was only jesting."

The young maiden smiled and made no reply. Rob remained in the bushes until they began to gather brush for the purpose of making a shelter for her use, when he began to gather some for the same purpose. He walked boldly up to

the fire with his brush and deposited it with the others.

"Why, thunder and crash!" exclaimed one of the men on seeing him. "Here he is now!"

Every eye was turned on him. He smiled, laid the British captain's coat on the ground, and asked:

"Have you anything to eat? I am almost starved."

"Is it you or your ghost?" one asked, staring at him.

"Oh, it's my ghost," he replied. "They never left a piece of me alive."

"I am very glad to see your ghost, anyhow," said Bartly, laughingly extending his hand to Rob. "How did you manage to get away, anyhow?"

"Why, this is a British captain's coat!" cried another, taking up the coat Rob had cast on the ground and examining it. "You didn't kill him, did you?"

"Not much," replied Rob; "but I had some fun out of him," and then he proceeded to relate his adventures from the time he parted from them in the early part of the day till that moment, to the intense delight of his hearers.

"How I would like to have seen him!" cried Bartly, laughing until the tears rolled down his face.

The two prisoners, both officers in the royal forces, were chagrined almost beyond endurance, but made no remarks. They were too much mortified even to look the daring hero in the face, though they ground their teeth in impotent rage. Early the next morning Rob sent the two prisoners forward to General Wayne with a communication detailing the circumstances of their capture.

"Now, my men," he said to his comrades, as soon as the prisoners and their escort were gone, "we'll push on to the Hudson and see what is going on up there."

Assisting Jane Baldwin into the saddle, he rode by her side for several miles, to the evident disgust of young Bartly.

"If you had not informed us that you had a sweetheart in the patriot army," he remarked to her, "I would think that Bartly was dead in love with you."

"Well, I am not in love with him, by any means," she replied, "and as soon as I can get to my friends I shall go."

"What! Cross the enemy's line?"

"Yes. Why not?"

"It might be dangerous to do so."

"That's true; but what am I to do? I cannot always be with the army, you know."

"No, you are right there," and Rob hung his head as if in deep thought for several minutes.

Suddenly he looked up, a gleam of satisfaction in his eyes, and said:

"I have it now! There is a friend of mine up in Westchester, on the other side of the Hudson, who wants a housekeeper, and you are just the one for him."

"Is he a married man?"

"No. He is a widower with five children. Westchester is the neutral ground, you know, where the people are much annoyed by both armies. As you are a patriot, you can do us a

great service once in a while by reporting the movements of the enemy to us."

Jane was a cautious girl, and thought twice before she spoke once, and in this instance her habitual caution was called in for consultation. She decided to go.

"Then we'll push straight for the Hudson," said Rob.

During the day they caught glimpses of the redcoats, who were on the lookout for patriot scouts, but by judiciously keeping in the woods they managed to go unseen, though their progress was necessarily slow. When night came on it found them once more on the banks of the Passaic.

"There's a farmhouse over there," said Bartly, pointing across an open field in the direction of a neat little farmhouse, which could plainly be seen from where they stood.

"I don't think we ought to take any chances to-night," said Rob, looking over at the house, "for we don't know whether they are Tories or patriots over there. If we keep here in the woods we can guard against surprise and have a chance to escape."

"Ah, I am willing to live outdoors all my life," replied Bartly, laughing. "I was thinking that perhaps Miss Baldwin would——"

"She can stand as much open air as any of you," promptly interrupted Jane, "so don't think of running any risks on my account. I think this is a delightful place to camp."

"So do I," added Rob, smiling. "You ought to have been a soldier, Miss Baldwin."

"Oh, stop that 'Miss Baldwin'!" cried the maiden. "My name is Jane."

"Good! You are as good a soldier now as many wearing the patriot uniform," and Running Rob proceeded to put out guards to prevent surprise during the night.

CHAPTER XII.—The Midnight Attack.

The scouts soon built a rude shelter for the young maiden, making her as comfortable as possible under the circumstances, and then proceeded to rest from the fatigues of the day. About midnight one of the guards noticed a dark object creeping slowly toward him—so slow and steady that its motion was like the hand of a clock—almost imperceptible. Yet the scout was on the alert. He was up to all the dodges of the Indians, and on glancing more closely at the object, he discovered it to be a bush.

"Oh, you are there, are you?" he muttered to himself. "I'll just show you a little trick worth two of that when I get a little nearer to you," and he resumed his walk on the line as if his suspicions had not been aroused. "You think to wipe me out on the sly and catch the others asleep, do you? We'll see about it."

Just then Running Rob came up to take the sentinel's place on guard.

"All right?" he asked, as he approached the guard.

The guard turned and whispered in his ear:

"There's a bush just behind me which has been creeping up nearer and nearer for an hour."

"The old dodge, eh?"

"Yes."

"Leave him to me, but wake up the others at once."

The guard went to his sleeping comrades, and cautiously awakening them, whispered:

"Indians—keep one eye open."

But the young maiden they permitted to sleep on in peace. Watching the bush creeping nearer and nearer to the line, until it was within five or six feet, Rob prepared to give whoever was under or behind it a first-class surprise. The moment for action came, and, drawing his knife, Rob bounded into the bush at a flying leap and came down on the back of a stalwart savage with all his weight.

"Ugh!" grunted the Indian, taken completely by surprise, and writhing with a broken back.

"Just what I say!" hissed Rob, plunging his knife to the hilt in the Indian's back.

A death yell escaped the savage as the keen blade entered his vitals, and a moment after a dozen others answered from the forest. The other scouts instantly sprang to their feet and hastened to the point of danger, which seemed to be on the side where Rob was standing guard. The low state of the campfire afforded but a dim view of the surroundings, and the scouts kept far enough away from it not to be made a target of in the light.

No sooner had the scouts ran to Rob's assistance than three stalwart savages darted forward and entered the brush tent in which the young girl was sleeping. They had not been seen by the scouts, who were awaiting a charge from their unseen foe.

"Help! Help!" screamed the girl, and a moment later she was dragged out of the tent by the two savages.

"Stay here, all of you!" cried Rob, as he bounded forward to her assistance.

Two or three bounds brought him to the side of the struggling girl. Swift as a stroke of lightning he dealt the blow, and a brawny Indian sank to the ground dead. Two others immediately attacked him, one of whom was disposed of by a kick in the stomach which shut him up like a jack-knife, whereupon the other seized him by the throat and attempted to use his scalping knife. In the twinkling of an eye Rob caught the uplifted hand with his left, and dealt him a blow with the right that sent him reeling backward as though a thunderbolt had struck him.

"Where are the others?" cried Jane Baldwin, seeing only Rob dealing single-handed with the savages.

"All on guard—you are safe—go back into your tent."

"No—no; give me a weapon, and I can fight, too!" replied the brave girl. "Ah! Here is one—two!" and, stooping, she picked up the scalping knife and tomahawk of one of the Indians.

No sooner had she done so than the one who had received the kick in the stomach arose to his feet and started toward her. Rob advanced to meet him, knife in hand, but she flew past him and dealt the savage a blow on the head with his own tomahawk, splitting him almost to his chin. The Indian sank down at her feet and gave up the ghost without a groan.

"Good girl!" exclaimed Rob; "you'll do in any emergency. Look out! Here come more of 'em!"

She pressed close to his side, but showed no sign of fear. Bang! bang! went Rob's two pistols, and two savages uttered their death yells as they reeled back and fell, each with a bullet in his breast. Then they closed in upon him like tigers on their prey. Two seized Jane Baldwin and disarmed her in a moment, whereupon she screamed for help. The other scouts then dashed forward in a body, just as four British soldiers appeared as the allies for the Indians. A terrific hand-to-hand fight ensued, in which the sabers of the scouts were drenched in blood, and Rob himself seemed covered with gore. But a few short minutes settled the issue, as one half of the assailants were down and the others began to retreat.

"Take these redcoats alive," said Rob, dashing in and seizing one who had turned to fly.

The Briton turned on him and fought like a tiger, but he was no match for Running Rob. He was captured, as were two others of his men, and the rest went howling off through the woods. Only two of the scouts were wounded, and those but slightly. Rob turned and looked at one of the British soldiers, this particular one seeking to avoid his gaze. The scout sprang forward, seized him by the shoulder, and dragged him to the light, where he could get a good look at his face.

"Oh-ho! It's you, is it?" he exclaimed, gazing at the man's face. "My captain of the long race of yesterday!"

"I'm your prisoner again," said the crestfallen Briton, "and demand to be treated as a prisoner of war."

"You do, eh? A man who will travel around with redskin scalpers ought to be hanged to the nearest tree when caught."

"Is this the man you made dance in the road for you yesterday?" young Bartly asked.

"Yes, and he is a better dancer than a fighter, I believe," replied Rob, and then, turning to the captain, he asked:

"Where is the rest of your command?"

"Up the river four miles."

"How came you to find out our whereabouts?"

The captain made no reply.

"See here, my fine gentleman," said Rob very sternly, "you have had a taste of my style before to-night. If you don't answer my questions, and tell the truth at that, I'll lay one hundred lashes on your bare back. That would be rather rough on one of King George's officers, wouldn't it?"

The captain turned deathly pale, but said he would answer truly.

"And you wanted the honor of the exploit yourself, didn't you?"

"I confess to a little weakness in that direction."

"Well, you see it will take your whole command to capture me, captain, and even then the chances would be about evenly divided. Now, I really don't know what to do with you fellows. I haven't men enough to send you back to General Washington as prisoners."

"Hang 'em!" suggested one of the scouts.

"What would you have done with me, captain, had our fates been reversed?"

"I would have sent you to Sir Henry Clinton in New York," replied the captain.

"You are sure you would not have made me dance, are you?"

"Yes, I never do such things."

"Of course not," and Rob's eyes twinkled with merriment; "you never captured a rebel, did you?"

"Oh, yes—hundreds of them."

"Is that so? Well, I shouldn't have thought it," and the scouts burst out laughing, greatly to the annoyance of the prisoners.

Here young Bartly whispered to Rob:

"Maybe his whole command will come when they hear of his capture."

"By gum! I never thought of that. Here—get to your horses, men! We must get away from here at once."

The British captain turned ashen pale at this order, but he said nothing. In a few minutes the whole party were mounted and ready to move.

"Follow me," said Running Rob, leading the way out of the woods into the road which ran close by, with the young girl close by his side.

They rode hard for over an hour, and then turned into a road that led to a ferry on the river, where they crossed to the east side and pushed on toward the Hackensack, which was reached by sunrise. They did not leave any too soon, for those who escaped from the fight on the banks of the Passaic carried the news to the British squadron that their captain was a prisoner in the hands of the daring scouts, and his rescue was instantly resolved upon.

Guided by the Indians, the entire command advanced to the spot, only to find the camp deserted. At that moment Rob and his scouts were crossing the river some eight or ten miles below. Not knowing which way they had gone, the redcoats could only wait until daylight to pursue them. That they had retreated—gone back to the main army, which was still encamped about the Monmouth battlefield—the officer in command of the redcoats never for a moment doubted. That the little handful of scouts would push forward toward the Hudson, with such a force in its rear, he could never believe, and so he concluded that pursuit would be useless. In the meantime Rob and his comrades crossed the Hackensack and pushed on toward the Hudson, intending to cross it opposite to where Fort George now stands.

They reached Farmer Hain's place just at sunset, and the river was only a mile distant. The tall masts of a British man-o'-war were seen on the river.

"That's bad for us," said Rob, "unless we can get over to-night."

Farmer Hains was the friend of Peppery Sam

CHAPTER XIII.—A Dash for the Hudson.

"How did you find out we were here?" Rob asked again.

"A loyal man sent us word."

"Who was he?"

"I don't know his name; he lives there in that farmhouse," pointing in the direction of the place across the field.

"I thought so. Why didn't you bring your whole command down and scoop us in?"

"I only wish I had," replied the captain, in a regretful tone. "But I thought I had enough with those Indians, who said they were anxious to capture you."

and Laughing Luke—a staunch old patriot who never failed to extend a helping hand to Washington's men when chance afforded. He recognized Running Rob the moment he saw him.

"Ah, I know you!" he said, extending his hand. "And I'll bet a fine fat turkey you want to get across the river—now, don't you?"

"Yes, sir; you have hit it exactly. Can you put us across?"

"Of course not. I'm a true king's man. I'll have nothing to do with you," and giving the daring scout a significant wink, he turned away, going toward the barn, as if in high dudgeon at the presence of the patriots.

"Well, I'll be hanged!" exclaimed Rob, looking after the old farmer. "That is the coolest thing south of the North Pole! But I'll show him that he has a master to deal with this time," and, striding after him, he soon overtook the old farmer, whom he knew to be a patriot.

"What did that wink mean, farmer?" he asked.

"Those prisoners may be exchanged or recaptured," he whispered, "in which case it would be well for me to have a good record on their side, you know."

"Oh!" and Rob smiled all over his sun-browned countenance. "I understand it now. I'll pretend to use force and——"

"Now, you just wait a while," interrupted the farmer. "Laughing Luke and Little Lou will be here to-night on their way to headquarters. Let them take your prisoners back with them, and they will not only be off your hands but be none the wiser in regard to me."

Rob consented, and went back to his men pretending to be in a towering rage with the old farmer.

"I'll make him put us across to-night," he exclaimed, loud enough to be heard by all, "or I'll put a stone about his neck and throw him into the deepest part of the Hudson! I won't be balked by an old Tory like him!"

They took possession of the farmer's barn to rest themselves till midnight, while Jane Baldwin went into the house to share the hospitality of the family. During the evening the patriot farmer managed to speak to the prisoners.

"For God's sake," whispered the captain to him, "send word down to that vessel in the river and they will send a force to rescue us."

"I will if I can, but it is very dangerous, as this man Ransom is one of the worst men in the rebel army. He wouldn't hesitate a moment in hanging me if he suspected me of doing such a thing."

Suddenly an alarm was given, followed by the report of a pistol shot.

CHAPTER XIV.—Laughing Luke and Little Lou

The shot came from one of the scouts on guard. Rob sprang to his feet and ran out to see what the trouble was.

"What is it?" he asked, on coming up with the scout.

"I saw a man creeping along by the fence there, and when I ordered him to halt he ran off. I sent a bullet after him, but he got away."

"Is that you, Rob Ransom?" asked a voice from the bushes beyond the road.

"Yes; who are you?"

"Little Lou. What in thunder did that fellow shoot at me for?" and the next moment the lithe, active form of Little Lou, the pride of the Continental army, crossed the road and shook hands with them.

"Where is Laughing Luke?" Rob asked.

"Down at the river watching that vessel," replied Little Lou. "There's something going on on board of her that attracted his attention. He'll be here soon. Which way are you going?"

"Across the river into Westchester, and up about White Plains."

"You'll find it hot up there. The Tories, cowboys and skimmers are having things their own way over there."

"Well, I've got to take a young lady over there to a friend of mine, and then turn my attention to business," and then he explained to the daring little spy how Jane Baldwin came to be under his protection.

While they were talking, Laughing Luke, Washington's famous spy, came up, and reported that the war vessel in the river was slowly going down with the tide.

"Glad to hear it," and then the friends talked together for some time, giving each other all the news they had.

"I have a captain and two of his men prisoners," said Rob, "whom I want you to take back to General Wayne for me. I can't well manage to keep them with me, and have no men to spare to guard them. Will you take them?"

"Trot them out."

While Rob went to get the prisoners ready to go, Laughing Luke and Little Lou saw Harris, the patriot farmer, and got two fleet horses for their own use, and were ready when Rob came out with the prisoners. The British captain was terribly disappointed when told that he was about to be sent to Washington's headquarters. The idea of being cast into prison was something terrible to him. He pleaded and begged Rob to accept a large ransom and let him go.

"Why, my name is Ransom," said the scout, "so you see I couldn't think of such a thing."

The two spies started off with their prisoners, and Rob turned his attention to getting across the river before daylight. The old farmer got out his little boat, which he kept concealed for the purpose, and carried half of them over and returned for the others. It was nearly daybreak when the last trip was made, and the patriots lost no time in getting away from the vicinity of the river. By noon they reached the farmhouse on the neutral ground of Westchester, where Rob expected to find a home for Jane Baldwin.

"Hello, Starke!" cried Rob, on seeing the farmer in the field.

"Hello!" responded the farmer, running toward the road, where the party sat on their horses. "What in the world brings you here now?"

"This young lady," pointing to Jane.

Starke stared at her till she blushed and turned her face away.

"Well, she could lead a man anywhere, I guess," and the widower smiled as he spoke.

"Yes, and drive him, too, if she takes a notion to do so," replied Rob, who then explained the situation to Starke.

"Of course she shall have a home," said Starke. "Just go up to the house, all of you, and we'll have some dinner, and the young lady can see whether or not she will like my home well enough to stay in it."

They all rode up to the house, where the two young daughters of the farmer, both under sixteen, with the help of Jane, got up a good dinner. The hours passed pleasantly, and ere they were aware of the flight of time the sun was sinking behind the western hills. They had lost so much sleep that they were easily persuaded to remain all night and rest themselves and their horses. Just before daylight Starke, who was an early riser, discovered that his stock was greatly excited over something, and, creeping around the premises, found that seven men—known in that section as skimmers—were trying to make an opening for the purpose of getting at the horses. He quickly called up Rob and his men, who came down upon and captured the whole gang before they were even aware that their presence had been discovered.

"Bring ropes here!" cried Rob, in a stern voice.

"You ain't a-goin' ter hang us?" cried the leader, in dismay.

"Yes, I am."

"But we ain't done nothin' to be hung for."

"That isn't your fault," replied Rob. "I am sure you would have stolen our horses if we hadn't caught you first."

"See here, Rob," said Starke, "if you hang those fellows here, the others will clean me out as soon as you leave."

"Then I'll take 'em somewhere else and do it. They don't get away from me alive. If General Washington would put me in command of this part of the country, there wouldn't be a live skimmer in it in two months' time."

The prisoners were bound hand and foot and left lying on the ground with a guard over them till the command had breakfasted and was ready to move. Jane Baldwin made up her mind to remain at Farmer Starke's place until she could see her way clear, or until after the war. Rob and his scouts bade her good-by and moved off, leaving her in tears, and driving the seven prisoners before them.

CHAPTER XV.—The Execution.

When about five miles from Starke's place, Running Rob stopped and called a council of war of his comrades to decide what should be done with the prisoners.

"Give 'em a hundred lashes and warn 'em to leave this part of the country," said young Bartly.

The vote was unanimous for whipping, and execution was proceeded with at once. Strong green hickory switches were cut, the villains tied to saplings, their backs bared, and in a few minutes the woods resounded with curses, cries, groans and howls. The stripes were well laid on, and a sicker set of men were never seen than those same skimmers when the whipping was ended.

"Now, go," said Running Rob, "and if we ever catch you in Westchester again we'll hang you to the nearest tree strong enough to hold you."

The wretches then left, vowing vengeance for the terrible punishment they had received. An hour or two after they were gone Bartly said to Rob:

"Do you know, I am impressed with the idea that those fellows will attack Starke's place to-night just for revenge for that whipping?"

"I am halfway inclined to believe you," said Rob, after a pause of a minute or two, "and perhaps we'll go back there to-night on the sly and see if they do put in an appearance."

They spent the day scouring the country and gathering all the information they could in regard to the British in and around New York. Night found them several miles away from Starke's, quite tired, yet full of pluck.

"Now for Starke's," said Rob, and they rode off in gay spirits, eager to catch the villains and administer condign punishment if they dared to repeat the game.

When within half a mile of the place, they dismounted, concealed their horses in a ravine, and went on foot to the farm, where they crept as near as they could without any one discovering their presence, and awaited developments. In less than an hour after their arrival they heard the sound of horses' feet along the road, and in a few minutes eight horsemen dashed up to the house, dismounted, and pounded on the door for admittance, while others guarded the sides and rear.

"Who is it?" Starke asked from a window.

"Open the door and find out," was the reply.

"I shall do no such thing."

"We'll break it down if you don't."

"You'll get hurt if——"

The rest of the sentence was cut short by the noise made by the blows on the door. Bang! went a rifle from the window, and one of the assailants rolled over on the ground with a bullet in his stomach.

"Oh, that's your game, is it?" cried one of the besiegers; "well, if you won't open the door we'll set fire to the house."

"What do you want here?" Starke asked.

"We want you."

"Well, you'll have to take me!"

Bang! and down went another.

"Fire the house!" cried the leader.

"Charge!" whispered Rob in his place of concealment, and in a second the dark forms of the scouts were creeping swiftly toward the villains, who were completely surrounded ere they were aware of their presence.

"Surrender!" thundered Rob, presenting a pistol to the heart of the leader.

Every man had a pistol at a villain's head or heart, and they dared not resist.

"Ah, that's Running Rob's voice!" cried Jane Baldwin inside, and the next moment the door was thrown open and the brave girl sprang out, pistol in hand.

"Get ropes again," said Rob, "and we'll have some music this time."

"Yes," said Starke. "I'll go in for hanging this time."

The ropes were brought, and the prisoners were tied securely.

"March!" ordered Rob, and the guard led the prisoners away in the direction of the ravine where they had left their horses.

Down in the depth and gloom of the forest preparations to hang the "skinner" were made in silent determination. Rob ordered his men not to speak to them, but do their work expeditiously.

"Mercy!" gasped the wretches, as the fatal nooses were placed around their necks.

"Swing 'em up!" ordered Rob, in reply to the appeal for mercy, and the next moment the wretches were writhing like worms, as they experienced the horrors of strangulation.

CHAPTTR XVI.—Conclusion.

The execution over with, Rob and his scouts returned to the house to spend the night there. The two "Skinners" who were killed by Starke were buried in the woods, and then everything settled down into the usual quietude of the place.

The scouts rode away, and it was weeks before they again saw Starke and the pretty Jane Baldwin. They roamed about over the neutral ground, and at last recrossed the Hudson to report to Washington, who was still in the vicinity of Monmouth. The result of this report was the removal of the army. It advanced toward the Hudson, in leisurely marches, crossed to the east side, and encamped at White Plains, where the commander-in-chief sat down to watch his enemy in New York City. One day Running Rob was sent down into Westchester again to see whether or not the enemy was making preparation for a move. Bartly went with him, as they had grown to be fast friends and inseparable companions. They reached Farmer Starke's place at night, and were received with open arms, Jane Baldwin being more than happy at seeing them.

"How do you like your new home, Jane?" Rob asked, as they sat down to supper with the family.

"Oh, I like it ever so much!" she replied.

"Yes, and we all like it better since she came," said the eldest daughter. "We really couldn't do without her. We don't intend ever to let her go away."

Jane smiled and looked happy, but made no reply. During the evening, Jane whispered to the scout that she had heard that her sweetheart in the continental army had deserted and gone to the enemy.

"I didn't cry over it," she said, "for such a wretch was not worth a woman's thought."

"You are right, and sensible, too," remarked Rob. "So you are free now to engage yourself to any one you like well enough to marry, are you?"

"Yes," and she laughed a merry, silvery laugh. "But I am not at all anxious to do so."

The two scouts then took leave of the family for the night, saying they would leave before daylight the next day. They were up while the stars were still shining, and got off, making several miles of their journey before the sun rose. A little before noon they were riding along the river road, when they were fired upon from the bushes on the roadside. Rob's horse fell dead, and he fell over in the dust.

"Oh, my!" cried Bartly, springing from his horse and running to his side. "Are you hurt?"

Five or six British soldiers rushed out of the bushes and seized him, but not until he had shot

one and cut down another. Rob was insensible, and a wound on his head was bleeding profusely.

"Let me help him!" said Bartly. "He will bleed to death."

"Well, let him bleed," growled the sergeant in command.

Bartly looked at him a moment and then hissed through his clenched teeth:

"You are a coward!"

"How so?" the Briton asked.

"To fire on two men from the bushes when you had three to one. Why didn't you face us like men?"

The sergeant looked daggers at him, and replied:

"Our business is to kill rebels whenever we meet them, and not to set ourselves up as targets to be shot at by them."

"The device of a coward!" retorted Bartly, turning to assist Rob, who was trying to rise to his feet.

The bullet had grazed his head so closely as to stun him, making an ugly wound some two inches long. He was soon over it, but only to find himself a prisoner in the hands of the red-coats. They carried them about three miles down the river, to where a company of British cavalry were encamped, where, to his astonishment, Rob met and recognized the young captain whom he had fought a duel with one moonlight night on the retreat from Philadelphia to New York. The captain recognized him, and said:

"So you are ours, at last!"

"Yes, but it took a cowardly ambush to get me."

The captain made no reply, but ordered the wound to be dressed, and walked off. That night, just before midnight, news came which caused the captain to break camp and make a hasty retreat, and in the hurry Rob and Bartly quietly slipped into the bushes and got away. The enemy did not discover their escape until they were nearly a mile away, when it was too late to seek for them. In the darkness of the forest the two scouts toiled wearily along, when suddenly Rob succumbed and fainted from the loss of blood.

"Oh, my God!" cried Bartly, "he will die, and I have no light with which to see what is the matter. Rob—darling—idol of my soul—oh, what am I saying?"

Rob recovered slowly—he had been unconscious but a moment or two. As soon as he was able to speak, he asked:

"Bartly, who are you?"

"I am Sarah Campbell!"

"Great God! And I never knew it."

"No."

"What made you do this?"

"I loved the excitement of a soldier's life, and—and—I like you, Rob!"

"You do—well enough to be my wife?"

"Yes—a thousand times, yes!"

"Then you shall be as soon as we get back to camp."

They succeeded in getting safely back to White Plains, where they were married; and now our story is ended, dear reader.

Next week's issue will contain "DOWN THE SHAFT; or, THE HIDDEN FORTUNE OF A BOY MINER."

CURRENT NEWS

A RESERVATION FOR THE AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES.

The commonwealth of Australia has taken steps for the preservation of the aborigines of that country, and has assigned a tract of public lands in the Northern Territories as reservation for the tribes. It includes the Mann and Petersen Ranges and practically the whole of Lake Amadeus. The governments of South and Western Australia have set aside adjoining areas for the purpose of this reservation.

A STRANGE FIRE.

A species of acacia which grows very abundantly in Nubia and the Soudan is also called the "whistling tree" by the natives. Its shoots are frequently distorted in shape by the agency of larvae of insects and swollen into a globular bladder from one to two inches in diameter. After the insect has emerged from a circular hole in the side of the swelling, the opening played upon by the wind becomes a musical instrument nearly equal in sound to a sweet-toned flute. The whistling tree is also found in the West Indian islands. In Barbadoes there is a valley filled with these trees, and when the trade winds blow across the island, a constant, moaning, deep-toned whistle is heard from them, which in the still hours of the night has a very weird and unpleasant effect.

MISTAKEN FOR BURGLARS.

Mr. and Mrs. Cohen Baker of Evansville, Ind., had a new maid at their house and were anxious to know how the maid treated the baby in their absence, so they decided to apply the acid test. They told the maid one Sunday night they were going to a show. They left the house, ostensibly for the theater, and peeped into the window a dozen times or more, in fact so often they attracted the attention of neighbors, who telephoned the police that burglars were trying to break into the Cohen home. When the police arrived they were surprised to find the "burglars" were Mr. and Mrs. Baker.

"COAL OIL JOHNNY" DIES.

John W. Steele, known widely in the East half a century ago as "Coal Oil Johnny," reputed then to have spent a comfortable fortune when oil was discovered on his Pennsylvania land, died of pneumonia January 1 at Fort Crook, Neb., where he was station agent for the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railway.

Steele, who was born in Shakleyville, Pa., in 1843, when a young man is said to have attracted considerable attention in New York by throwing away money to boys and men on the street apparently because he liked to see them scramble for it. He came West forty-five years ago and had been in the Burlington's employ for thirty-seven years.

The stories about "Coal Oil Johnny" never represented him as gambling or making a profligate

use of his wealth, but rather as enjoying the sight of others getting what was so difficult to obtain. Attending a theater in Pittsburgh one day, the story is that he stepped out of his box when a blackface comedian finished a song and handed the man a \$1,000 bill and asked him to sing it again.

The family lived in the station house in four tiny rooms.

PANSIES, DANDELIONS BLOOM IN BAY STATE.

Dandelions and pansies were reported in bloom January 3 as markers of a late and mild winter simultaneously with word that icebergs had appeared on the transatlantic steamship lanes as harbingers of an early spring.

With the mercury at the temperate stage, a pansy in full bloom was plucked from a garden in Natick that had been under a light snow several days ago. In Hingham dandelions were found. May flowers have been reported from several places in recent weeks.

The iceberg indication of approaching spring has been fairly dependable, old salts say. The present movement has brought down to the Grand Banks and the transatlantic track bergs, growlers and fields of pan ice weeks ahead of their normal drift. The ice invasion has reached such a point that vessels are being forced south, and to-day the International Mercantile Marine Company ordered its ships to take the longer southern lanes at once instead of waiting until February 1, the usual date for change.

1,000-YEAR-OLD TREE.

Somma Lombardo, a small place about thirty miles from Milan, Italy, boasts the oldest tree in Italy, perhaps the oldest in old Europe. It is a cypress, and tree experts say its age is over 1,000 years. History has mentioned it more than once, probably because it grows near a spot where history has been rather busy.

King Francis I. of France, running before his foes after the Battle of Pavia, in the fifteenth century, hacked part of its trunk with his sword—probably in irritation at his bad luck.

The tree is now a giant. Cypressess are tall, rather rigid, very straight and give a peculiar sad nobility to those parts of Italian landscape where they flourish. But this one is taller than its brothers, cousins or uncles. It is 81 yards high, of 18 feet girth, and its deep green branches widen out toward the top to a circumference of 63 feet.

Napoleon, who respected few things when they came in his way, found this venerable tree in his path when planning the splendid road from Milan to the Simplon Pass. But he gave orders that the road should go out of its straight course here to save the cypress.

Fifty years ago a thunderbolt struck it, but burned only part of its sombre crest. It is the property of the city of Somma Lombardo and it has been inclosed.

CHARLIE CHAPMAN'S COURAGE

—OR—

THE BOY WHO TOOK CARE OF HIS MOTHER

By WILLIAM WADE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Reward of Courtesy.

"Say, young man," called out a voice from the front of the office to Charlie, as he sat tilted back reading over some of his Latin, for he had not entirely given up his studying for the college examinations.

"Yes, what is it?" asked the youth courteously.

He sprang up and beheld an oldish looking man of about fifty-five looking at him.

"Why in thunder don't they have any polite people in this village? Do they think every man is a crook?" cried this personage, very impatiently.

"I don't know what other folks think, but I don't think you are a crook," said Charlie, in his direct way. "Can I do anything for you, friend?"

He had very quickly sized up the character of the newcomer. He saw that he was well and expensively dressed, although very quietly as regards style.

The man had a fine face, with smooth shaven features, and keen eyes which missed nothing. He, too, was sizing up the young lad.

"Well, you can help me, if you are not of a suspicious nature," said the man. "I want about five dollars to send a message for some money to my banker's residence. It is Saturday afternoon, and my office is closed in New York and the same with the Chicago one."

Charlie reached into his pocket and drew forth a wallet, from which he produced a five-dollar bill.

"Do you need any more; you might be short and want to have that horse stabled and get your own meals," said he politely.

The man laughed, and this time all the bitterness left his face as he replied:

"Why, you are a little gentleman. However, I don't blame the folks around here for being so suspicious of a fellow from the city whom they don't know. They must have a lot of crooks coming up here."

He took the money and started toward the buggy.

The vehicle and the steed were travel worn and covered with heavy dust.

"I've been taking a long ride through the country to-day, and was making a cut across here, so that I could take the railroad back for New York. But I lost my coat out of the buggy. I had put it on the side of the seat and was pretty careless, I guess."

He scowled as he climbed into the buggy.

"Yes, I lost about two hundred dollars and all my identifying letters, but this will reach Chesterton at once, and he will telegraph me some money. I may have to wait a few hours, in case he is not at home. I had not thought of that. I'll be back in a minute."

The big man whipped up the horse, and sped down the quiet street toward the telegraph office at the station.

"Well, you never even asked my name," said he, when he returned, with a smiling face.

"I didn't mistrust you, sir," said Charlie simply. "I know people when I see them."

"Well, it's more than your blamed old storekeeper does," said the man angrily, as he mused over something. "I'll just fix him for that, too. Are you doing any trading, or what sort of a hangout is this?" he asked, looking around at the humble little office room.

"I'm a farmer boy, who has found time enough to swop in everything from mules to eggs," said Charlie.

"Well, I'm head of the biggest harvester company in the United States and your storekeeper wouldn't believe me, nor take my word for it. I am just inconvenienced as every man is at times, and, by George, I believe I'll send something your way."

Charlie looked at him in a sort of surprise, yet the youth was naturally too polite to put in any remarks.

"I see you don't quite understand, young man," said the older man. "It's just this way. I am James Gregg, of the big harvesting machine company, and I control the selling end of it throughout the country. I have been riding through the country, from one town to another, just to size up the field. And I have sized one part of it all right."

He pointed toward the general store run by Meeks.

"That man has been writing me for the agency here of my stuff, and one of his letters was lost in my wallet, when I dropped that coat back there on the road somewhere. But he was so suspicious of me, that he would not believe my statements just now, nor would he go to the expense of sending a telegram to New York to find out. He will learn that it was bitter economy."

"Meeks has never been a philanthropist, as long as I've known him," laughed Charlie. "I paid him a little debt in his own coinage, a bit ago, and he hasn't gotten over it yet. He lost a year's growth worrying over the money he had stung himself out of."

James Gregg looked at the young American, who showed already his keen business sense in the sharp yet honest expression of his vigorous face and frame.

"Lad, I'll give you the opportunity of a lifetime, for you look good to me. I judge men quickly. I will give you the harvester control for this territory, if you can make good with it."

Charlie shook his head.

"I don't know machinery at all," said he. "And I don't like to put up a house that I can't build a roof on."

(To be continued)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES.

LONG FALL; SLIGHT BRUISES.

Such trifles as falling from a three-story building do not bother Max Dietz, a laborer on the new hospital under construction in Rochester, Minn. He plunged forty feet to the ground late the other day, but was uninjured, except for minor facial bruises. He went back to work a few minutes after the tumble.

FAKE CONCERT NETS \$2,000.

A blond young man who said he represented Pryor's Band, and who worked for a concert so enthusiastically that \$2,000 worth of tickets for the Palace Theater, White Plains, N. Y., the other Saturday night, were sold, is being sought by the musically inclined of the Westchester suburb.

The young man departed with the \$2,000, and there was no concert, for the reason, it has since been learned, that the young man had no real connection with the Pryor Institution. The owners of the theater explained that they have nothing to do with the performances there, merely renting the playhouse.

81-YEAR-OLD MINER MAKES \$90 WEEKLY.

Davy James, a little old Welshman who lives at Banian, Pa., is the youngest old man in Clearfield county. Davy learned to mine coal in Wales many years before he came to America. He never forgot how, and despite the fact that he has passed his eighty-first milestone, during the last year he has been one of the most dependable miners. Thomas McGlynn of Madera has on his payroll.

This veteran miner, despite his years, never lost a day the mine worked during the last summer and fall, and his pay checks for each two weeks during the entire summer and fall have averaged not less than \$170 and from that up to \$190.

Miners are willing to wager real money there is not another eighty-one-year-old kid in Pennsylvania or any other State able to equal Davy James's record.

WIFE FINDS \$100.

The deliberations of Magistrate Douras in Harlem Court, New York, were interrupted the other day by the sudden appearance of a woman, who ran down the aisle waving a roll of greenbacks at him.

"Hey, Judge, stop a minute!" she shouted.

"What's the idea?" said the magistrate.

"I just found this \$100 under my husband's pillow. I'm Mrs. Brotal. My old man wasn't robbed at all."

The case of the alleged disappearance of \$100 from the pocket of Isidor Brotal, 215 East 100th street, was before the court. Brotal accused his friend, Ernest Leguna, of picking his pocket after a New Year's party at Brotal's home. Leguna was held in \$1,000 bail.

"Discharged," said the court.

After apologies had been tendered and accepted

complainant and defendant walked out of the court room arm in arm.

BULLET PROOF TOWER TO GUARD DISTILLERY.

Searchlights and a bulletproof steel tower are being erected here to guard the Old Pepper Distillery, on the turnpike between Lexington and Frankfort, Ky., from the thirsty raiders who descended recently on the plant, killed a United States revenue agent and stole several barrels of whisky.

The tower already has been erected on the top of the distillery, and workmen are now installing the searchlight inside it. Guards will work in two-hour shifts and from sundown to sunup the searchlight will be kept constantly playing on the grounds and the roads near the distillery. Besides these precautions a special electrical alarm system is being installed and huge signs are posted everywhere warning everybody to keep off the grounds.

The Old Pepper Distillery now holds several hundred thousands of dollars' worth of aged Bourbon liquor, and virtually everybody in Kentucky wants some of it. Many have tried to get it, but nobody was successful except the raiders of a few weeks ago.

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JOE FRENCH, THE BOY CASTAWAY.

By D. W. Stevens.

It was a dark, rainy night in March, when Joe French left the athletic club in Harlem, of which he was a member, and mounting his bicycle, rode down to the elegant house in which he lived on Lexington avenue with his stepfather.

The boy was an orphan of seventeen, with dark eyes, a strong, boyish face, chestnut hair, and a hot, passionate, yet courageous nature, and having an excellent education, was studying law when his mother died.

She left him half a million, which he was to get from the guardianship of Giles Gifford, his stepfather, when he came of age; but the terms of her will stipulated that if the boy died ere gaining his majority, Gifford was to inherit the money, estate and a shipping business which he managed.

Joe and his stepfather never could agree, somehow, as the man was very tyrannical, and never liked the young law student; but as he had nothing and was dependent upon Joe for his income, he had to treat the boy with more deference than he cared to.

Dismounting from his wheel, the boy entered the house, changed his clothes, and was going downstairs to supper, when he passed the parlor door, and Gifford, who stood in the room, called him in.

"I have a word to say to you, Joe French," he exclaimed, in rather ugly tones. "It is my intention to put you to work in the office to-morrow. I have recently bought a ship with borrowed money, and as she has a cargo of freight on board and sails to-morrow, I need your help."

"But how about my school work?" asked Joe, in surprise.

"Let it rip! My business is more important than your school," the man replied harshly. "If the cruise of the *Romany Lass* proves to be successful, I will own her outright, and be independent of my commission as trustee of your estate. She runs to Santo Domingo, and——"

"See here, sir," said the boy firmly, "I don't intend to give up my studies for you or your business! If you need a clerk, hire one!"

"What! You dirty little hound! Dare you disobey me? Hold your impudent tongue, confound you, or I'll break every bone in your body."

He flew into a rage, and with an ugly scowl upon his brow, he seized a chair, raised it threateningly and sprang toward the boy.

He was bringing the chair down toward Joe's head, when the boy struck him a blow in the face with his fist that knocked him down.

A yell of fury pealed from the man's lips, and his head struck the floor, depriving him of his senses the next moment.

The ghastly look upon his face filled Joe with horror, and he thought for a moment that the unlucky blow had killed the man.

Overwhelmed by a panic, he recoiled from the body, and rushing out into the hall with visions of the gallows staring him in the face, he put on his hat and fled from the house.

For some time the boy wandered aimlessly through the dark, deserted streets, his mind in a whirl over the crime he had committed, and when he came to a realization of this position, he found himself down by the North River side.

Near by there was a ship on which the stevedores were loading the last of her cargo, by which Joe knew that she was to depart the next day, and he stealthily made his way on board, and entering the captain's cabin, he ensconced himself in a locker and sat down.

Before he had been there an hour he was so wearied by the walk and the excitement he passed through, that he fell fast asleep.

How long this state of oblivion lasted Joe did not know, but he was finally awakened by the hum of voices out in the cabin, and, listening intently, he heard two men talking in low tones.

"Ay, now, I'll do ther job fer one thousan' dollars, sir," he heard a very gruff voice remark. "I've done sich work for other shipowners besides you, Giles Gifford, an' I never bungles a job."

"Then here is the money, Captain Tom Brady," replied another and very familiar voice.

"My stepfather!" gasped the listening boy, thrilled through and through.

It certainly was the man whom he imagined he had killed, and it then dawned upon Joe's mind that Bifford had simply been knocked senseless.

"Right!" he heard Captain Brady, who evidently commanded this ship, say.

"Very well," returned Gifford, in satisfied tones. "We understand each other. For this money you are to scuttle the *Romany Lass* when you are within one day's sail of Port au Prince, and upon your return swear to the underwriters that she sprung a leak and foundered."

"Ay, sir," assented the gruff captain. "I understand. Ha' you a heavy insurance?"

"Very, for nearly one-half of her cargo, which has been manifested in the Custom House as general merchandise, for clearance, really consists of shavings, waste paper and sand."

Joe was shocked beyond measure over this exposure of their villainy.

But upon trying to get out he found that the locker door had closed with a spring lock, which could only be opened on the outside.

Not knowing what to do, the boy reflected that if he made a noise and exposed his presence there, the captain would suspect that he had overheard the plot, and might attempt to injure him to keep the secret.

Joe wisely kept still, and, several hours afterwards he knew by the commotion going on that a tug had the ship in tow, and was hauling her out into the stream.

There was no going back for the boy now, and he had to make up his mind to make a voyage in the *Romany Lass*.

Day had broken and no one entered the cabin, as the captain was busy outside on deck, getting his craft out of the harbor.

The dreary morning passed away, and the ship began to rock and toss, roll and pitch, and Joe became deathly sick in the confined atmosphere

of the locker, and lay there groaning and vomiting.

No one came near him till nightfall, when the skipper entered his cabin to have his supper, and heard the boy's moans.

"A stowaway, by thunder!" he roared, as he opened the locker door, saw the sick boy, and roughly dragged him out into the cabin by his coat collar.

"Don't touch me! Oh, I'm so sick!" gasped poor Joe faintly.

"Blast you, what are yer a-doin' aboard o' my craft?" roared Brady, glaring down at the hapless runaway as he lay doubled up on the floor.

For obvious reasons, Joe refrained from stating his case, and resorted to the time-worn excuse that he merely wanted to be a sailor.

"Ho, ho! a sailor, hey?" he roared. "Waal, I'll teach yer ter be a sailor!"

The captain then went out and apprised the men that he had just discovered a stowaway on board, and ordered a couple of them to carry him from the cabin into the fore-castle.

It was two days afterward before Joe was able to get up, although, in the meantime, the skipper made several attempts to get him out, and when he crept up on deck he was badly disfigured.

No sooner had the boy made his appearance when the brutal captain espied him, and put him to work doing the worst and hardest drudgery on the ship.

On the seventh day out from port he stood on the forward deck coiling a rope, when Captain Brady strode up to him.

"See here!" he exclaimed roughly, as he paused in front of the boy, "I hev been a-thinkin' fer some time as you might a-been in that 'ere locker on ther night yer came aboard, an' heered all wot me an' a friend o' mine wuz a-sayin' to each other. Now, didn't yer?"

"Yes—every word!"

"Look out, my lad! Before yer kin harm me, yer may die!"

One night, while Joe was leaving the fore-castle to go on watch, the mate called him, and said the captain wanted him to go down into the hold to fetch up a box of fish for the cook.

When he got down in the hold, he approached the case from which he intended to take the box, when he heard a quick footstep behind him, and turned just in time to see Captain Brady spring from behind a pile of freight, armed with a marlinspike.

Before the boy could utter a word, Brady dealt him a crushing blow with the instrument and felled him senseless.

When the stricken boy recovered his senses, he found himself bound hand and foot and securely gagged, lying on a heap of barrels.

He saw the lantern he had carried gleaming at one side of the hold, and saw the captain, armed with an auger, boring innumerable holes in the ship's hull, through which the sea water was pouring.

Having finished his work, the captain left the hold.

Presently he heard a commotion above.

"The boy has scuttled ther ship!" he heard Brady yell.

The boats were lowered, and one after another departed on the gloomy sea, heading for the southward.

Faster poured the water into the hold, lower sunk the doomed ship, and as the rising brine lapped around his body Joe gave up all hope of life.

But just then he saw the mate come down the hatchway ladder with a lantern to see how the water had gained, and as he came to a pause in arm's reach of the boy he saw him and the state he was in.

It then dawned upon his mind that Joe was innocent and the victim of some one else who must have committed this outrageous crime.

Convinced of this, the man grasped the boy, cut his bonds, and cried:

"This is a trick! Follow me up on deck, my lad!"

When he reached the deck he found that the boat containing Brady had gone, and then he told the mate and the three men his story.

They were horrified; but they had to leave the sinking ship, and all hands scrambled into the remaining quarterboat, which had been provided with a sail and jury mast, and pulled away.

Soon afterwards the *Romany Lass* sunk.

Five days of intense suffering followed, for they sighted neither land nor a friendly sail, and the pangs of hunger and thirst half maddened the unfortunate castaways.

On the seventh day, Joe sat in the stern sheets of the boat, steering, beside the mate, when a seagull flew by overhead, and the starving crew observed the dorsal fins of several sharks in the water following them.

"That's a sure sign of death!" remarked the boy.

His words came true, for within an hour afterwards one of the poor castaways, in a fit of desperate madness, flung himself into the sea, and the sharks pounced upon his body and carried it down in the depths.

Night settled down, and the despairing crew saw no hope.

But it brought the castaways good tidings, for a steamship loomed up at midnight, and its watch, hearing their cries, saw them.

They were picked up and nourished back to life. The steamer, fortunately, was bound for New York, and in due course of time it arrived there and the castaways went ashore.

Joe's first care was to notify the authorities of Giles Gifford and Captain Brady's villainy, which the saved castaways corroborated.

He then went home, accompanied by an officer and the sailors, and when the servant admitted them, they found Joe's stepfather and the rascally skipper, who had got safely to land, in consultation over the supposed success of their plot.

Taken by surprise, they were easily arrested and lodged in jail.

In due course of time they were convicted upon Joe's evidence, which the sailors substantiated, and were sentenced to prison.

Joe's fortune was then put in the care of a responsible man, and the boy resumed his law studies until he graduated.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, JANUARY 26, 1921.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

CAMELS PUT TO WORK IN WARSAW.

Camels hauling long trains of small carts are frequently seen in the streets of Warsaw, one soldier acting as driver with other soldiers looking after the vehicles. The camels are used by the army authorities in the transport of goods about the city and suburbs, having been trained for this kind of service by Russians. The animals were captured from the Bolsheviki by the Poles in a drive on the northern front last summer.

FERRYMAN HAS NEW WAY.

Leslie Cull, ferryman at Rudellia, Ark., ferries his foot passengers partly on his boat and partly on his back. The river is so low that the boat can't land at the bank on this side of the river. It hangs on a shallow bar about fifteen feet from the bank. The teams and cars can make it all right, but the footmen can't. But Leslie does not lose any business on this account. He packs them on his back from bank to the boat, then floats them across.

FOWLS WORK RANCH.

W. J. Little of Pasadena, Cal., has devised a scheme that not only doubled his profits but has lessened his work in caring for his orange trees. He has hit upon the idea of combining an orange ranch with a chicken ranch.

By scattering grain between two rows of orange trees he gets his land worked by the chickens scratching for the grain.

Starting at one side of the field, he scatters grain between two rows each day, and when the other side is reached he recovers the territory in the same manner. Dust kicked up by the chickens in the summer time is a cure for scales on orange trees, Little added. For his ranch of three acres Little has 1,500 chickens, which he claims is the right proportion.

HUNTERS KILL 500 WILD GOATS.

The Pacific Fleet News, organ of the U. S. S. New Mexico, in its issue of Nov. 15 states that the Fleet hunting party which left in a train tug on Nov. 8 for Catalina Island, Southern California, in charge of Major H. F. Wirgman, U. S.

M. C., being composed of a number of officers from various ships of the fleet, with seventy-five bluejackets and marines, returned on Nov. 12. The News adds: "They reported a very enjoyable trip and the slaughter of about 500 wild goats. They were quartered very comfortably in the old army barracks at Isthmus Cove. Each morning the party took the motor sailer and disembarked at the west end of the isthmus. Line was formed on the ridges and the goats driven out of the valleys and shot as they came up the hills. Detachments from the U. S. S. New Mexico, Idaho, Mississippi, New York and Wyoming and the blue-jacket pioneers from the New Mexico formed the party of about ninety in all. Isthmus Cove is an ideal camping ground, with water already piped along roads and plenty of wood handy. If the necessary permission can be obtained it is intended to take the Fleet marine regiment over to the island for a week's camping and field firing when the fleet schedule permits.

LAUGHS

"Were you a bull or a bear when you went into Wall Street?" "Neither, I was one of the fellows they were both after."

Mr. Flubb.—This affair is horribly dull. I guess I'll go home. Miss Clip—That would remove some of the dulness, Mr. Flubb.

Hank Stubbs—Ev'rybuddy orter lay up some-thin' fur a rainy day. Bige Miller—I s'pose that's the reason they's so much kickin' over the drouth.

Millicent—What was the first bird the Pilgrims saw when they landed? Evelyn—The turkey? Millicent—No; the tommyhawk.

He—Why does the maid decline to clean my coat with benzine? She—Since the chauffeur jilted her she can't stand the smell of it.

Little Nephew—Auntie, did you marry an Indian? Aunt—Why do you ask such silly questions, Freddie? Little Nephew—Well, I saw some scalps on your dressing-table.

First Student—How is it you jay so little attention of late to your personal appearance? You should remember "clothes make the man." Second Student—Yes, but I can't find a man to make the clothes.

A mother of four daughters, one of whom had recently married, cornered an eligible young man in the drawing-room. "And which of my girls do you most admire, might I ask?" "The married one," was the reply.

Church—I see a concern has a large thermometer in front of their place of business that can be consulted only by dropping a penny in a slot. Gotham—I suppose the proprietor looks for some change in the thermometer every day.

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

ADMITS DEFEAT OF GERMAN FLEET.

In reviewing the secret report of Admiral von Scheer, of the German navy to the Kaiser, recently made public, the Vossische Zeitung, of Berlin, candidly admits the defeat of the German High Sea Fleet at Jutland, and says, in part: "What was the result? The German fleet was put out of condition to fight for ten weeks at least. Certainly the British losses were greater, but a little blood letting is nothing to a giant, though fatal to a weaker adversary. The German fleet fought out the fight honorably against superior forces. That it did not achieve victory is not a reproach which should be leveled against it any more than that the unfortunate result of the whole war should be regarded as a fault of the German people."

SEIZE 700 LIQUOR AUTOS.

The statement that 1,800 persons had been arrested and 700 liquor carrying automobiles seized by a flying squadron of eighty Federal Prohibition enforcement officers since July 1 in breaking up illicit transportation of liquor between New York and Boston was made by William J. McCarthy, enforcement agent for New England. Closest attention is now being paid to Connecticut, Mr. McCarthy said.

Automobiles with special tank compartments for accommodation of liquor, piano cases, orange crates and furniture vans were mentioned as among the most popular ways of moving liquor. Tanks concealed within seat cushions and behind the upholstering of sedan cars have been discovered.

Mr. McCarthy asserted that Springfield, Worcester, Lowell and Providence had been practically closed as avenues for liquor destined for Boston.

A RIVAL OF THE STEAM WHISTLE.

It may be that the steam whistle in time will be a matter of past history; at least, the steam whistle is steadily losing ground in favor of the electric siren, which has proved considerably more efficient in more ways than one.

In industries large and small, in mines, factories, foundries—wherever a warning signal with greater range and more distinction in tone than the steam whistle is required—the electric siren has been found to fill a long felt need. The electric siren is clear, unmistakable, most distinctive. It cannot be confused with any other sound. While a boiler full of steam is needed for the steam whistle, the electric siren may be operated from any number of places through the factory by a simple turn of the switch. It is always ready, dependable, fool-proof, insignificant in upkeep cost. The electric siren can be either large or small—large enough for the largest works, and small enough for use in any department of such works, where it must signal through the noise and din of incessant toil and bustling activity.

KILLED BY RIFLE HE FOUND.

Several weeks ago in a lot near his home, No. 2364 62d street, Brooklyn, fifteen-year-old Wesley Carpenter found five parts of a 22-calibre rifle and took them home. After school each day he had quietly worked in his room assembling them.

The other Saturday night the rifle was in working order. Wesley slipped in a cartridge and pulled the trigger. There was no discharge, and twice more he tried, but failed to explode the cartridge. An hour later his sixteen-year-old brother Howard came to the room to retire.

Lying near the bed, shot through the head, lay Wesley. It is believed he looked into the muzzle of the rifle to ascertain the failure of it to fire and it accidentally went off.

His father, Howard Carpenter, telephoned to the Coney Island Hospital for an ambulance, but, according to him, when more than an hour had passed and none was sent, he took the boy to the institution in a friend's automobile. Wesley died a few hours later. The hospital authorities say that the delinquency in answering the call was because the one ambulance allotted to them was out on another call.

FRENCH CLOSE LAST SLAVE MARKET.

What is believed to have been the last slave market in existence in the world has just been wiped out by the French authorities.

When French troops entered the sacred city of Ouezzan, in Morocco, a short time ago, they discovered the slave market still in existence.

On the very day the French arrived a long caravan approached the city bringing in several score of slaves of both sexes, captured of slave hunters in the unexplored regions to the south. The slave hunters fled and the entire crowd of slaves were liberated by the French.

For many decades, perhaps centuries, the slave auction had been a monthly feature of life in Ouezzan. The caravan arrived as a rule early in the month and hundreds of buyers flocked into the city for the auctions and the accompanying festivals.

On the day of the opening of the sale all the human "stock" was placed in a circular enclosure in an open place near the center of the city. Slave buyers wandered about discussing the merits of the "stock" like connoisseurs at an automobile show.

Unmarried women usually brought double the price of those who were married and there was always a lively competition for the most beautiful of the unmarried girls. The highest price was paid for men with good physiques.

According to natives of Ouezzan, the slaves were generally well treated. Some of the women were received into their masters' homes almost on equal footing with wives. The slave dealers were forced to share part of the proceeds of the sale with the city.

INTERESTING NEWS ARTICLES

WELL DIGGERS EAGER.

Well diggers of Hiawatha, Kan., are not scarce if there is something to dig.

It was five years ago when a farmer came home from St. Joseph with two dozen bottles of beer and eight quarts of high proof whisky. It was a hot afternoon. The farmer put the refreshments into a grain sack.

The sack he lowered into a dug well. Either the bottom of the sack gave way or the rope slipped off. Anyway, the booze went to the bottom of the well. And there it rests.

The well is about thirty feet deep, walled with rock. It is said to be infected with gas. But everybody in the neighborhood knows what the well contains.

Planning to repair the well, the farmer advertised for workmen a few days ago. He has had more than a dozen applicants from all parts of Brown County.

HIS IMPERSONATOR.

Maxim Gorky, the playwright and radical writer, had an unusual experience when traveling in America during his exile from Russia, according to a story going the rounds of London. Among the towns he visited was Georgetown, S. C., where he found one of his own plays, "The Lower Depths," billed, together with an announcement that "at the end of the performance the author will appear in person to salute and thank the audience."

Gorky naturally went to enjoy this treat, and found that when the curtain fell after the last act of his play a man made up to resemble him came before the footlights and told the audience in broken English how flattered he felt at the reception accorded his drama. Going round to the stage door, Gorky tackled his impersonator, who confessed that he had perpetrated the same fraud in many small towns.

"I have also," he added, "passed myself off as Rostand, Sudermann and Maurice Donnay. It pleases the public and does the real authors no harm."

Gorky was so amused at the man's cheek that he promised not to expose him, and refrained from disclosing his identity during the remainder of his brief stay in Georgetown.

LIBERTY BONDS WILL JUSTIFY YOUR FAITH.

Slowly but surely the price of Liberty bonds continues to rise, declares the Tonopah Times. The most notable thing about the situation is that this price increase persists in the face of a falling market for other securities, including those of business concerns of known strength and sustained prosperity. When the price of government securities was at a low ebb and many of these industrial stocks were rising and paying high

rates of interest, many people sold their Liberty bonds to buy the industrial stocks. To-day the latter sell for less in the financial centers than the former.

The present situation is a pleasing commentary on the stability of this government, which has weathered the storms of war and reconstruction, and is emerging sound and solvent. It is a good lesson, too, on patience and conservatism in investment, and a fair illustration of the fact that the great underlying principles of business are neither wiped out nor rendered ineffective by any temporary disturbance, even that of war.

Those who labored to sell Liberty bonds to their fellow citizens will rejoice at the vindication of their faith and their efforts. The bonds did their full share toward winning the war. Nobody can doubt that. And now they are proving an increasingly good investment for those wise enough or fortunate enough to hold onto them.

—BUY W. S. S.—

WAR'S NEWEST INVENTIONS.

The World War left behind it a fascinating subject for speculation—what dreadful sort of engines, says a correspondent in the Manchester Guardian, will the submarine and the aeroplane be when we enter "the next war"? Technical progress is constantly being made, though little may be heard of each separate step. For instance, so far the submarine has been cut off from all communication with the rest of the world when it was submerged; only when on the surface of the water could it communicate with land stations or other vessels. The electric waves penetrate sea water with great difficulty, and the receiving instruments in submerged boats have hitherto been unable to detect and interpret them. But now the finer development of the instruments is making it possible to receive slighter and fainter waves than they had yet been able to take note of. The barrier is being broken down, and just as the radius first of wireless telegraphy and then of wireless telephony has been steadily expanding, so we can foresee the time when submerged ships will communicate freely and over long distances with one another.

At present it is only a beginning; the radius of communication falls away steeply as soon as the aerials of the boats are submerged. The Wireless World is quoted to the effect that if a submarine running at full speed on the surface in a heavy sea has a range of fifty miles, its range will sink to twelve miles when its aerials are just submerged and to three miles when they are nine feet below the surface. Even that is not negligible, but the imagination leaps to the time when submarines lying on the floor of the sea will peacefully concert their plans by wireless; when the admiralty will be able to plot the positions of submerged merchant fleets, and when submarines, guided by wireless messages, will nose about in the depths of the sea for the hidden merchantmen.

TRAVELING SAND DUNES

As one makes the ascent of the Andes from the Pacific port of Molendo, Peru, following the line of the Southern of Peru Railway, the climb to the divide is broken by two great steps or wide-spreading shelves of desert or pampa.

On the first of these steps, about two hours' steep climb from the sea, and at an altitude of from 4,000 to 5,000 feet, are located the famous-drifting sand hills of Peru. The plateau is here about 20 miles wide, the air thin and dry and no trace of vegetation to be seen—only these gigantic crescent-shaped sand dunes dotting the pampa as far as the eye can see. Composed of fine, gray crystal sand, they gleam white against the brown of the desert, and their horns point toward the prevailing south wind of this region. They are from 15 to 25, or even 30, feet high, 20 feet in breadth across the thick part of the crescent and sometimes 100 feet from horn to horn. So tightly is the sand packed that the feet of the horses or mules make little impression on it.

These sand hills, called mendanos travel with almost imperceptible slowness, writes G. E. McDonald in the Scientific American.



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Do you sometimes find blood on your toothbrush? Are your gums often sore or spongy? Do teeth become loose? Foul breath with pus on gums? Gum boils? Sore or sensitive teeth? Discomfort in gums between teeth? Disagreeable taste? Inflamed gums? Then beware of pyorrhea, the insidious, dangerous disease. Have you distressing ailments elsewhere in your body that may be due indirectly to one of the above-mentioned teeth or gum symptoms?

Think of it! Eminent medical men have found that nine out of every ten persons that they examined have pyorrhea! This disease is often a life-shortener. It has caused terrible misery and deaths.

If you know you have pyorrhea, or if you are in doubt and wish to know more about it, we want to send you our book. It will cost you nothing; will come postpaid if you write to Apex Remedies Corp., 80 W. Genesee St., 401-BA, Buffalo, N. Y. Show your friends this advertisement.



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MONT BLANC LOSES TOP.

The top of Mont Blanc fell off November 26 and started an enormous avalanche, which rolled down into Italy along the gorge of the Brenva Glacier, destroying in its course the whole forest of Pourtud.

The origin of the avalanche was unknown till yesterday, when the weather cleared, and a powerful telescope could be brought to bear on the mountain. Then it was found that part of the limestone pyramid which forms the summit of the greatest mountain mass in Europe had split and fallen.

The avalanche was one of the biggest and most destructive known for some time. The rock and ice tumbling from the summit dislodged immense snow fields, which in turn tore out rock, and the great mass went rumbling down the mountainside for nearly ten miles. It plunged along the glacier bed, leaped the valley of the Doire, throwing pine trees and boulders about like corks in a waterfall, and came to rest almost miraculously at the entrance to the little Italian village of Pourtud. Several houses, which stood almost in its path, were spared by a width of only a few yards, and so far no less of life has been reported.

REMOVING TATTOO MARKS

Tattooing is the mechanical introduction of pigments under the skin and a very well known process. The pigments employed are carbon cinnabar, carmine and indigo.

Most methods employed to remove these marks, says Science and Invention, are by a reactive and a destructive inflammation which will result in the formation of a crust, later cast off together with the tattooed markings. One method is to re-tattoo the marks with a solution of 30 parts of zinc chlorid and 40 parts of water. A mild inflammation will result; a crust forms and about a week later this falls off, leaving a scar which gradually heals. Later a repetition of this may be necessary. This may be done by the professional tattooer.

The second method is to tattoo again, making the punctures close together after the design has been drawn over with a concentrated solution of tannin. A stick of silver nitrate is then firmly drawn over the surface and after a period of several minutes it is then wiped off. This is far more effective than the first and less scar forms.

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